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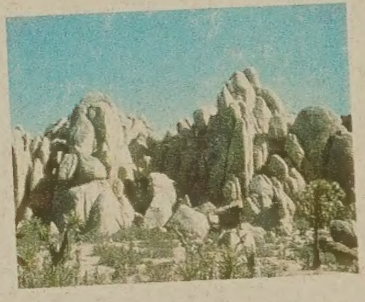

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Creosote Bush Scrub Plant Community, with vehicle route proliferation impacts.

A **Mojave Monkeyflower** in bloom, just one of the area's sensitive plant species.

Ord Mountain Planning Unit, A picturesque landscape supporting many resources & uses, including backcountry touring, camping, hunting, rock climbing, livestock grazing and thoroughfare transportation.

The **Desert Tortoise,** California's State Reptile and a federally listed threatened species.

A **Golden Eagle chick,** an example of the area's bird of prey species.

The **Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Rings,** just one of the area's Unusual Plant Assemblages.

Badlands & boulder hillsides, representing important wildlife habitat values found in the area.

Desert Horned Lizard, one example of the many varied life forms or **Biodiversity,** found in the Ord Mountain Planning Unit.

The **Desert Bighorn Sheep,** one example of the area's sensitive wildlife species.

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ORD MOUNTAIN

VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION

Barstow Field Office
California Desert District
Bureau of Land Management

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CA-680-00-08

January 25, 2000

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ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT ROUTE DESIGNATION APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: *WEST MOJAVE ROUTE DESIGNATION, ORD MOUNTAIN PILOT UNIT, BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE SCREENING COMPONENTS*

APPENDIX II: RECREATION CRITERIA FOR ROUTE DESIGNATION

APPENDIX III: *DESERT WASHES, MANAGING A FRAGILE RESOURCE ON OUR PUBLIC LANDS*

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I. INTRODUCTION

This **Environmental Assessment** (EA) analyzes designation of a vehicle access route network for public lands within the **Ord Mountain Planning Unit**, and associated on-the-ground implementation. Public lands in the area are located within the California Desert Conservation Area, or CDCA, and are administered by the Barstow Field Office (BFO) of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

This document begins by describing the purpose and need for the **proposed action** in detail, specifically the **designation of a vehicle access route network and its implementation.** It also addresses a **No Action Alternative of retaining the current network of approved routes, referred to as the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network**. The development of an Ord Mountain Technical Review Team (TRT), the products generated by this team and their recommendations for vehicle route designation are also briefly referenced. The TRT aspects of the Proposed Action, as well as the specific analysis methods used by the BLM's Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) in developing the proposed vehicle access route network, are also addressed.

Next, the **affected environment of the Ord Mountain Planning Unit** is described in detail; an area of mixed public and private lands situated in the Ord Mountain vicinity of the California Desert, located approximately ten miles southeast of Barstow, California (**Figure 1**).

Following a description of affected lands, this document describes the **environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative. Direct, indirect, residual and cumulative impacts upon applicable elements of the human environment** are described. **Applicable mitigation measures for both alternatives, recommended by agency staff, have been incorporated into each as operating parameters.**

Implementation methods such as **signing and closed route rehabilitation** are briefly analyzed in this EA, though additional site-specific environmental analysis would be needed in some instances. This would be relevant particularly where suitable **desert tortoise** (***Gopherus agassizii***) habitat or cultural resources would be affected in a manner not addressed herein, or a need for desert tortoise handling is identified. No "take" of State or federally listed animals, such as the desert tortoise, or land use plan amendment-level actions, are proposed herein.

Relevant aspects of law enforcement, the scheduling of designated open route grading & maintenance, development of private road easement acquisition criteria and associated easement prioritization procedures, visitor contact and vehicle use education, are not addressed in this document. Environmental documentation addressing installation of route designation information kiosks has been completed previously. The development of outreach strategies and/or route network map brochures would be addressed after the designation process has been completed.

II. BACKGROUND

The BLM designates vehicle routes in order to **avoid or minimize damage or degradation of the natural, cultural and aesthetic values of the public lands**, and **to provide the general public with reasonable vehicle access to public lands for recreation purposes and casual use**. The BLM's California Desert District manages public lands in the CDCA designated by Congress, which was established with the passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976. FLPMA directed BLM to complete a comprehensive management plan for public lands within the CDCA. The CDCA Plan was completed in 1980. The purpose of the CDCA Plan is "to provide for the use of the public lands and resources of the CDCA, including economic, educational, scientific, and recreational uses, in a manner which enhances the environmental, cultural, and aesthetic values of the Desert and its future productivity."

The CDCA Plan classified lands within the CDCA into one of the following four categories:

(1) **Multiple Use Class (MUC) C**, or **Controlled Use**, areas include both Congressionally designated wilderness areas and those portions of wilderness study areas recommended to Congress as suitable for wilderness designation;

(2) **Multiple Use Class L**, or **Limited Use**, areas were so designated to protect sensitive, natural, scenic, ecological, and cultural resource values. Public lands designated as Class L are managed to provide for generally low intensity, carefully controlled multiple use of resources, while ensuring sensitive values are not significantly diminished;

(3) **Multiple Use Class M**, or **Moderate Use**, areas were so designated to provide for a controlled balance between higher intensive use and protection of public lands. This class provides for a wide variety of present and future uses such as mining, livestock grazing, recreation, energy, and utility development; and

(4) **Multiple Use Class I**, or **Intensive Use**, areas were so designated to provide for concentrated use of lands and resources to meet human needs. However, reasonable protection will also be provided for sensitive natural and cultural values within these areas.

The CDCA Plan included a **motorized-vehicle access element** to provide a system and set of rules governing access to the CDCA by off-highway vehicles (OHV). This part of the plan designated three types of areas for vehicle access on all public lands in the California Desert District. The vehicle designations are **open**, **limited** and **closed**. The designations should not be confused with the multiple use classifications described above.

In Open Areas, vehicles may travel anywhere within the designated open area boundaries. This applies to: (1) those lands in MUC I specifically designated "open" for vehicle travel, and (2) certain sand dunes and dry lake beds listed in the CDCA Plan.

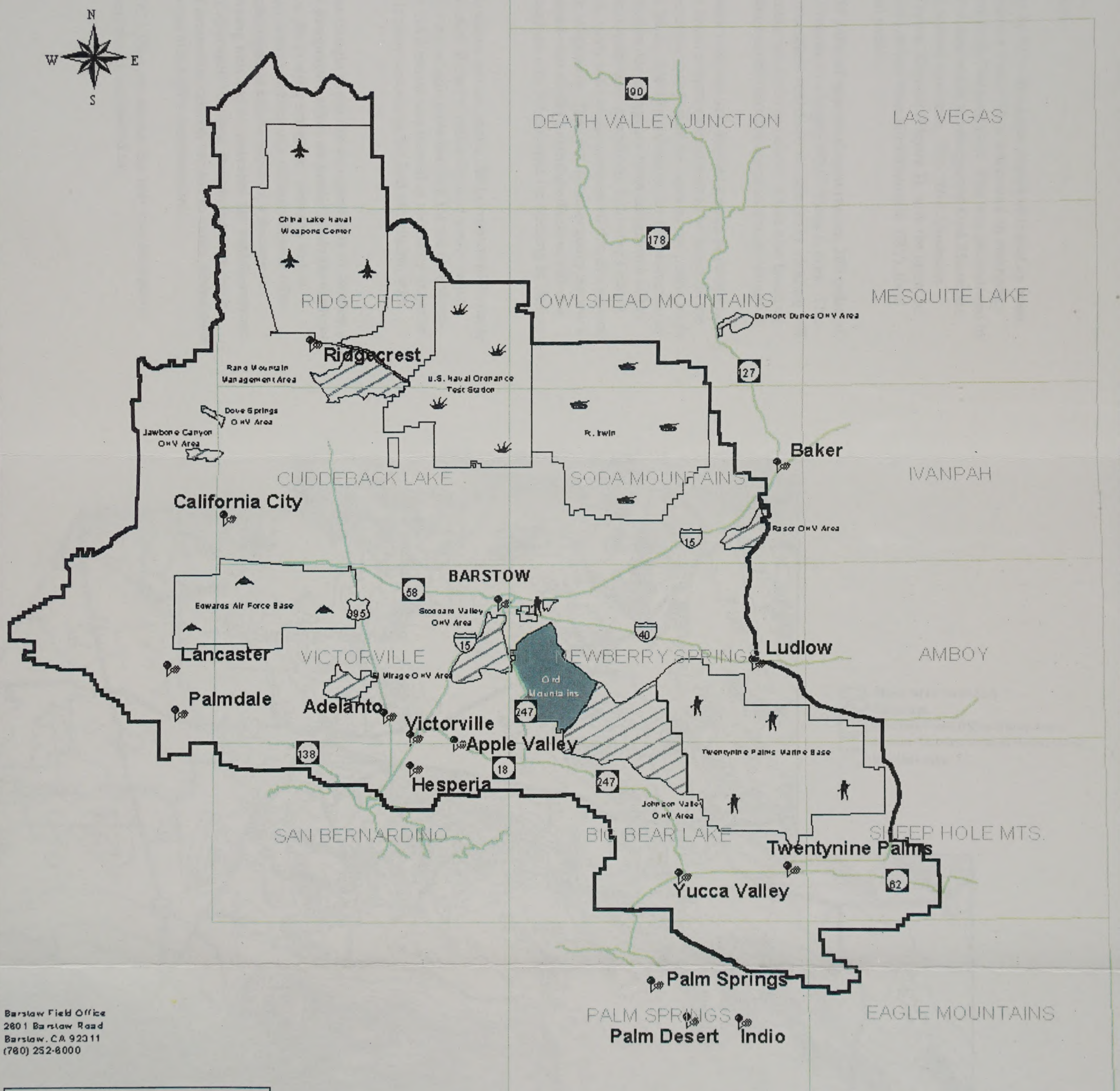
In Limited Use Areas, vehicle access is limited to routes of travel designated in accordance with the rules for each multiple use class or Special Area, as outlined in the CDCA Plan. This applies to all lands in Classes L and M and any land in Class I that is not specifically designated open. It also applies to land in Class C prior to its establishment as wilderness by Congress, lands in Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) as well as other special areas in accordance with the area's management plan.

No vehicle travel is allowed in Closed Areas. This applies to: (1) wilderness areas established by the California Desert Protection Act of 1994, with the provisions established in the act; (2) areas closed to vehicle travel through the off-road vehicle designation process; and (3) areas closed to all use for safety reasons.

Prior to passage of the CDCA Plan, BLM managed access, recreation and vehicle use under the **Interim Critical Management Program (ICMP).** Guidelines set forth in **Executive Order 11644** (Use of Off-road Vehicles on Public Lands, Nixon 1972), as well as **Executive Order 11989** (Off-road Vehicles on Public Lands, Carter 1977), were also adhered to. The ICMP and the **CDCA Plan** provided initial designation of routes within the boundaries of the CDCA and noted these designations would require periodic updating. The **Motorized Vehicle Access Element** of this latter plan was amended in 1982 to clear up discrepancies between the CDCA Plan and regulations governing motor vehicle access and route designation. This amendment ensured that rules in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) would be followed in route designation efforts. In addition to the 1982 CDCA Plan Amendment, other site specific plan amendments addressing route designations in the CDCA have been completed.

Figure 1: Ord Mountain Planning Unit Regional Map

Ord Mountain Planning Unit
Vehicle Access Network Project



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III. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

Regulations, executive orders and the CDCA Plan all require the BLM to designate routes of travel as open, limited or closed to vehicular travel. In 1995, BLM staff in the Barstow Field Office designated an emergency vehicle route network of approved routes specifically for the Ord Mountain Planning Unit. This was necessitated by a noted increase in regional route proliferation, concern for desert tortoises within the designated **Ord Mountain Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit (Figure 2)**, and other at-risk natural resources. This "***Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***" was published in the August 7, 1995 Federal Register (**Figure 3**), with the intent of later refining it, based on recommendations from an informal technical review team (Ord Mountain TRT), local landowners and the County of San Bernardino, as well as the general public.

This emergency vehicle route network resulted in approximately **100 miles of approved open routes, 300 miles of closed routes and 150 miles of undesignated (private/State land) routes**, in a largely **MUC Class L area**. This **initial network design was based on an estimated 80-85 percent complete vehicle route inventory yielding 550 miles of vehicle routes** from existing topographic maps of the planning unit (refer to below). It was also based on BLM identified vehicle use and camping patterns, known biotic resources and recorded historic/cultural resources.

However, designation of the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network involved only **limited public participation** and concentrated on application of 43 CFR 8342.1. This regulation requires route designations to be based on the **overall protection of resources on the public lands**, the promotion of the safety of all the users of the public lands, and the minimization of conflicts among various users of the public lands. Specific provisions for the protection of at-risk natural resources or to facilitate recreation use were not applied in this emergency route designation effort. Nor were Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan recommendations. In addition, following Federal Register notification of this emergency vehicle access route network, many individuals commented that this network did not address the purpose and need of the stated emergency action adequately. They felt the **emergency network process did not fully document at-risk resources within the affected area or the potential effects of either a designated vehicle network or lack of a designated network**. Members also felt rationale for opening or closing a specific route were not adequately described.

A consensus emerged between BLM and representatives of several interest groups, that a **100 percent vehicle route inventory**, as well as a **higher level of public involvement**, was needed. Either to refine the emergency vehicle route network recommended by BLM staff or to create a completely new vehicle route network for the Ord Mountain Planning Unit. This level of route inventory and greater public involvement was viewed as necessary to garner the level of public support thought necessary to maintain any vehicle route network in the Ord Mountains, with limited BLM personnel and funding.

Secondarily, a revisited Ord Mountain Route Designation Effort was thought to provide an opportunity to develop a **"pilot" route designation effort, applicable to a potential future designation effort on public lands throughout the West Mojave Desert**. A full opportunity for public comment on the existing emergency network and an alternative vehicle route network could also be provided. It was also determined that any refined network effort should include **recommendations from an informal TRT** of affected interests and be based on a document prepared by the BLM describing **at-risk resources within the planning unit** and the **potential for vehicle-related impacts to these resources.** Suggestions for a **"best management approach"** to route designation were recommended to be included in this latter document. The development of **recreation criteria for use in route designation** and **written rationale for opening or closing any existing route** were also highly recommended.

In addition to complying with regulations, executive orders and CDCA Plan provisions, this previous emergency vehicle route network and the refined vehicle route network proposed herein, are needed to:

1. **Ensure that no unnecessary or undue degradation of public land resources occurs (e.g., impacts to natural or cultural resources) as the result of appropriate thoroughfare vehicle traffic and special feature access;**

2. **Comply with planned actions specified in current public land management plans for two adjacent off-highway vehicle areas, calling for route designation within the Ord Mountain area;**

3. **Reflect changes on the ground not reflected on older maps of the area (e.g., route segments have moved or disappeared and hazards have been identified);**

4. **Incorporate pertinent recommendations of the Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan, specifically implementation of route designation, and to reflect consideration for all sensitive species known to occur within the planning unit;**

5. **Reduce conflicts between public land users and improve visitor safety; and to**

6. **Provide benefits secondary to the designation effort itself, resulting from work done in support of the designation process**, such as:

   A. Improvement of planning unit mapping accuracy.
   B. Improvement of the public's awareness of routes approved for vehicle use and the public's ability to accurately locate themselves on the ground.
   C. Improvement of search & rescue missions by reducing time needed to find/treat victims.
   D. Improvement of the ability to monitor planning area levels of use and potential hazards (e.g., increase efficiency in signing and identification of areas needing rehabilitation).

In 1996, BLM contracted with the Natural Applied Research Science Center (NARSC), to develop a **100 percent vehicle route inventory** for the Ord Mountain Planning Unit, one of the first Geographical Information System (GIS) mapping efforts of its kind. Extensive **ground-verification** of the **662 miles of vehicle routes** identified in this inventory indicated that this GIS mapping effort was extremely accurate. It also allowed for "high resolution" image development and facilitated resource analysis in relation to potential route networks for the planning unit.

Concurrently, the **Ord Mountain TRT** came into being on an informal basis. This informal focus team was initially comprised of a small group of individuals and interests named on the BLM's affected interest list for the Ord Mountain Livestock Allotment. However, all individuals who cared to attend were welcomed. This small group grew in size, but varied in terms of meeting attendance, over the course of its two-years in existence.

At times, this **informal focus group** included individuals representing the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), Southwest Center for Biological Diversity (SWCBD), California Off-Road Vehicle Association (CORVA), Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee (DTPC), American Motorcycle Association (AMA), Desert Tortoise Council (DTC), California Association of 4-Wheel Drive Clubs and Catellus Corporation. BLM, Biological Research Division of the U.S. Geological Survey, Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service personnel also participated. Additionally, individuals from the local Slash X community, the Ord Mountain Livestock Allotment Lessee and San Bernardino County Government officials participated in some of the TRT meetings and discussions.

Figure 2: West Mojave Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Map

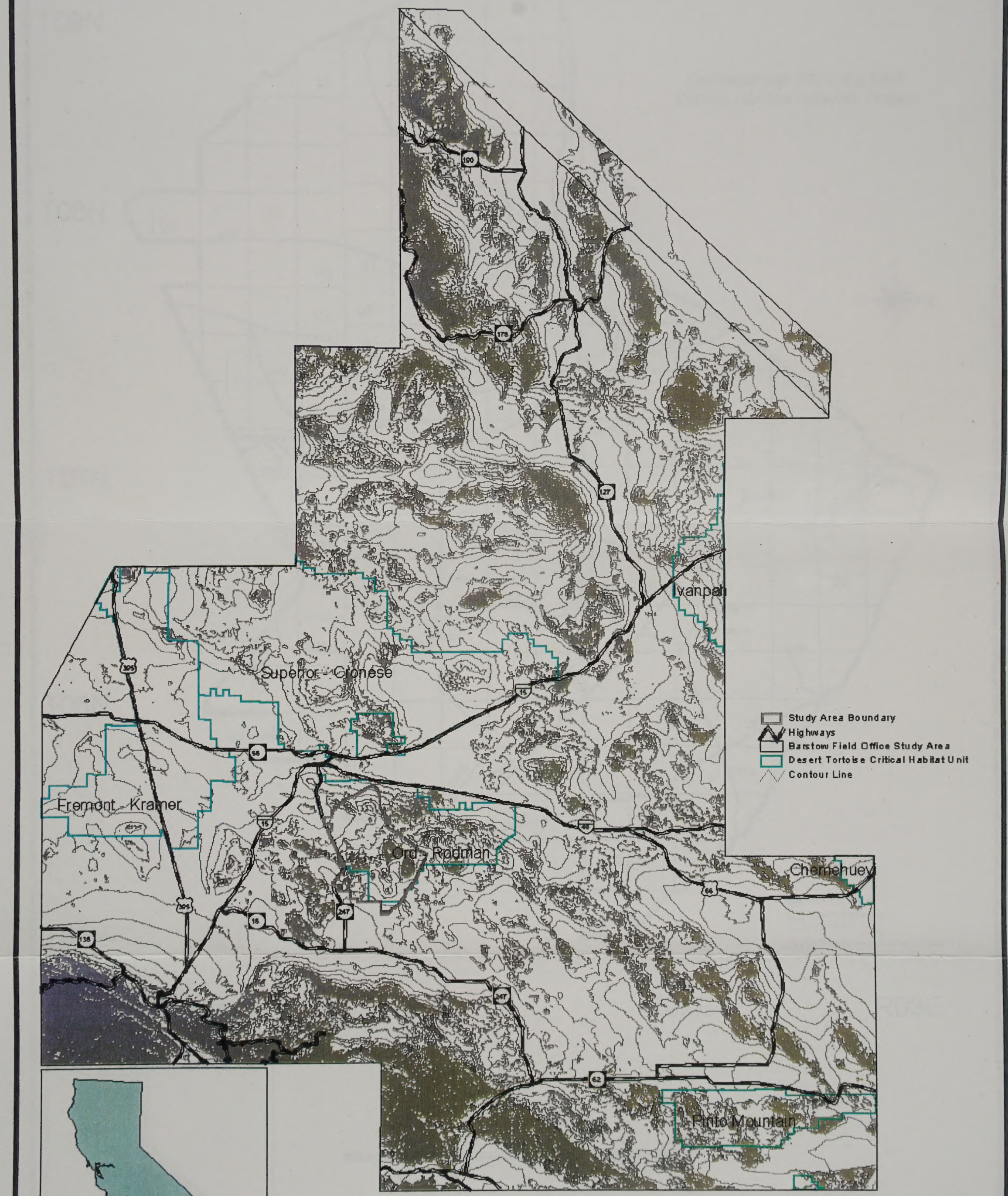
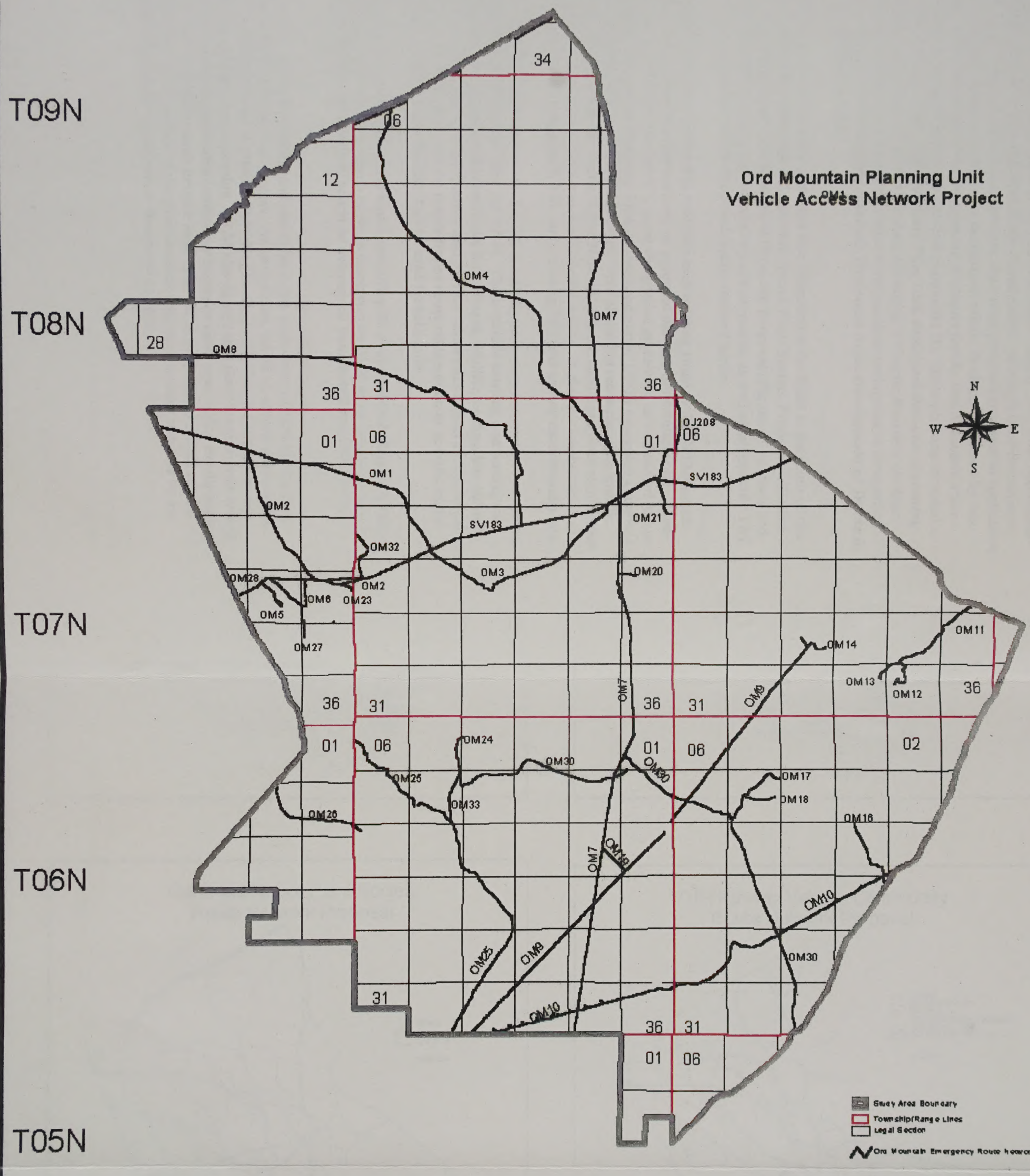


Figure 3: Emergency Route Network

Figure 3: Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network



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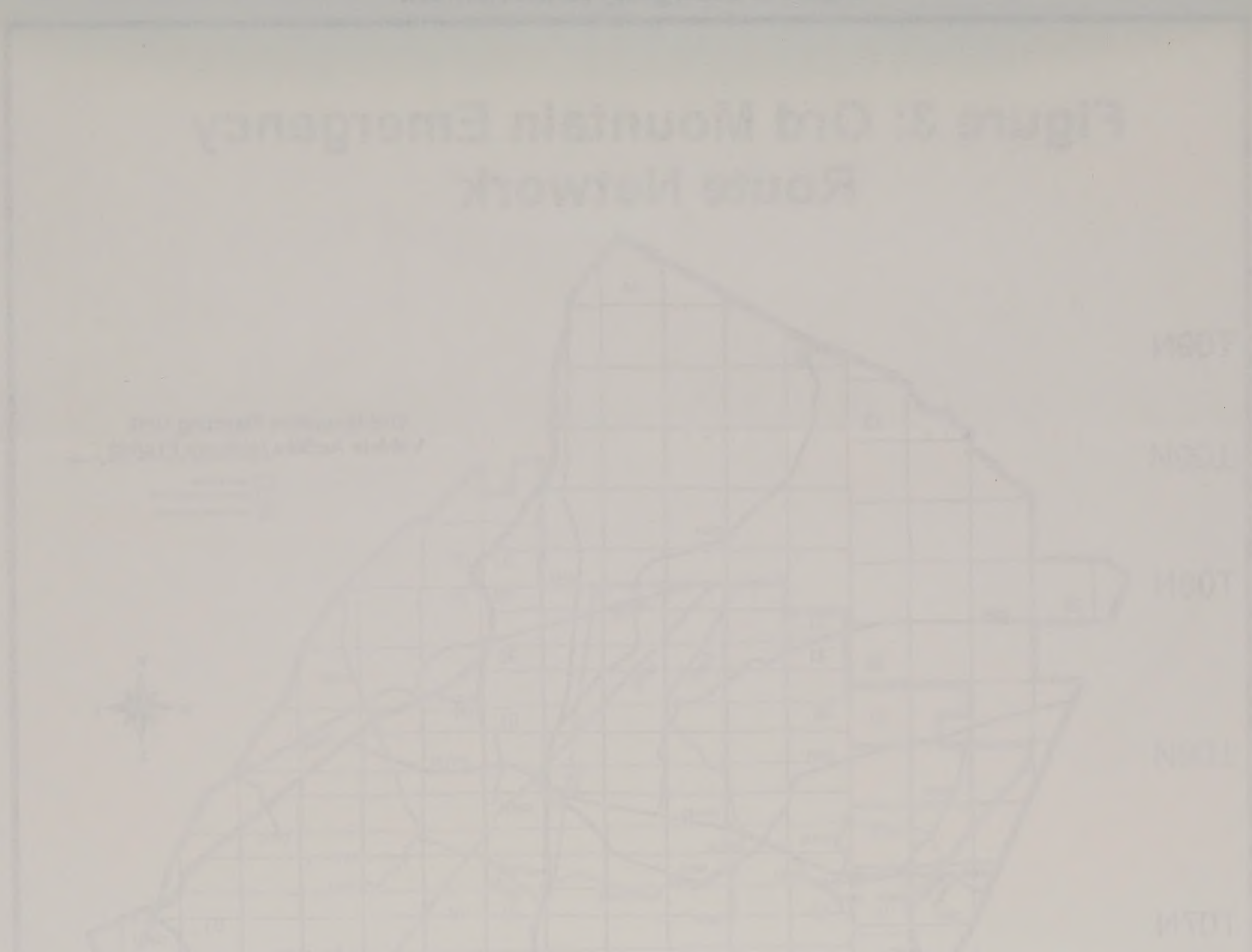
The Ord Mountain Pilot Project is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Barstow, California in San Bernardino County. The total area within the project boundary is 124,088 acres (195.3 square miles). Of this area, 102,135 acres (159.6 square miles) are managed by the BLM, 21,972 acres (34.3 square miles) are privately owned, and 881 acres (1.4 square miles) are state lands.



This informal TRT discussed all aspects of route designation in the Ord Mountain Planning Unit, from **recommendations** on what and how to designate, to how to sign and rehabilitate closed routes. Although these discussions focused on finalizing the Ord Mountain Vehicle Access Route Network, they were premised on potential application to all public lands within the West Mojave Desert, as a pilot route designation effort. Products generated by this TRT included a ***Wildlife Biologists' Workgroup Report on Designation of Routes for the Ord Mountain Pilot Project*** (**Appendix I**) and **Recreation Criteria for route designation** (**Appendix II**). Other products included a document entitled "***West Mojave Route Designation, Ord Mountain Pilot Unit, Biological Resource Screening Components***" (**Appendix I**) and a document entitled "***Desert Washes, Managing A Fragile Resource On Our Public Lands***" (**Appendix III**). Lastly, a document discussing general route proliferation impacts in designation areas versus non-designation areas, entitled "***Environmental Auditing Tendencies in the Development of Tracks in Open Areas***" (**Appendix IV**), has also been included.

Four separate Recommended Vehicle Access Route Networks were also submitted to the BLM as the result of this informal TRT, including an **OHV Community Proposal**, a **California Native Plant Society Proposal**, a **Desert Tortoise Council Proposal** and a **Southwest Center for Biological Diversity Proposal** (**Figure 4**). Aspects and recommendations set forth in these latter TRT products and vehicle network proposals, as well as site-specific TRT information, were incorporated wherever feasible into the Proposed Action outlined herein.

An **interdisciplinary BLM team** (IDT) was then assigned to **evaluate each existing route** in the Ord Mountain Planning Unit for current use status and to make recommendations on proposed network route designation. These IDT proposals were made in the context of CDCA Plan MUC L route designation guidelines, as well as Ord Mountain TRT and ***Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan***, recommendations. USGS topographic maps, previous route designations, staff-generated GPS maps and field review were all used in recommending specific route designations. A proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Access Route Network (**Map E**) and a proposed signing and implementation plan (**Appendix V**) have been incorporated into the Proposed Action. A plan for rehabilitation of designated closed routes is also included herein (**Appendix VI**), incorporating TRT and agency recommendations.

In addition to that specified above, the IDT considered several factors in making their route designation recommendations (**Appendices I-VIII**, ***Ord Mountain Biological Map Set B1-3***). These include **existing and anticipated regional vehicle use/camping patterns; site-specific considerations for cultural, wildlife, botany, law enforcement and recreation concerns**; specific **San Bernardino County and private landowner concerns**; the degree of **natural re-vegetation occurring on low-use routes**; and the **feasibility of route reclamation of specific route segments**. **Appendices VII and VIII** summarize the decision factors used for each route.

In addition, the IDT recommended a number of **vehicle route easements** (**Map E: *Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network***), based on the proposed network. Acquisition of these easements by BLM or an interested private/public entity could occur in the future, should this course of action be determined feasible and supported by the general public.

An **informal agreement** with the County of San Bernardino and one of the larger landowners of the planning unit, Catellus Corporation, was finalized during this designation process. As an outcome, the **BLM agreed to recognize one access route on public lands to specific private sections within the planning unit, if such a route was currently in existence and the affected landowner was amenable. BLM also agreed that these access routes would be designated as Limited Use routes, limited to applicable landowner access or other uses within the discretion of the BLM Field Manager that would not impede upon private land uses.** BLM lastly agreed that all vehicle access maps made available to the general public, outside of the environmental analysis document prepared by the BLM for this designation effort, would depict only vehicle routes designated as open.

Though vehicle use on route segments across private land has been occurring for some time and is ongoing, **acquisition of formal easements with applicable landowners would solidify all aspects of the proposed vehicle access route network**, completely ensuring no interrupted use of particular segments. Acquisition of these easements on private land, by BLM or an interested party, could also entail use of owner-involved monitoring or closure criteria, placement of appropriate signing, as well as provide for normal maintenance of these road segments, where applicable. The need for these identified private land road easements was reduced however, as an outcome of a January 2000 land exchange with Catellus Corporation. A public land increase of 11,835 acres within the planning unit has resulted in a more consolidated public land area, reducing private land road easement needs.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Approved Routes:
Includes routes designated open or limited for the general public to use and existing routes that have not been closed.

Designated Routes:
Routes that have been authorized as open, limited, or closed to vehicular travel through the formal designation procedures in 43 CFR 8342.

Existing Route:
Routes wider than 2 feet that were existing prior to December 31, 1980, but have not been designated open, limited, or closed. NOTE: Routes within motor vehicle closed areas are designated closed.

Geographic Information System (GIS):
A computer system that allows geographic data to be stored, manipulated, analyzed and displayed.

Global Positioning System (GPS):
A satellite based system for accurately locating positions on the earth's surface. When many positions are collected, area and linear features (e.g., routes of travel) can be accurately plotted.

OHVs:
Off-highway vehicles are motorized vehicles used off public highways (e.g., on routes of travel or within open areas) and meet the definition in 43 CFR 8340.0-5(a).

Other Lands:
Lands not managed by BLM. Included are lands owned or managed by private individuals, corporations, other Federal agencies, Indian tribes, state, county, and local government.

V. CONFORMANCE WITH LAND USE PLANS

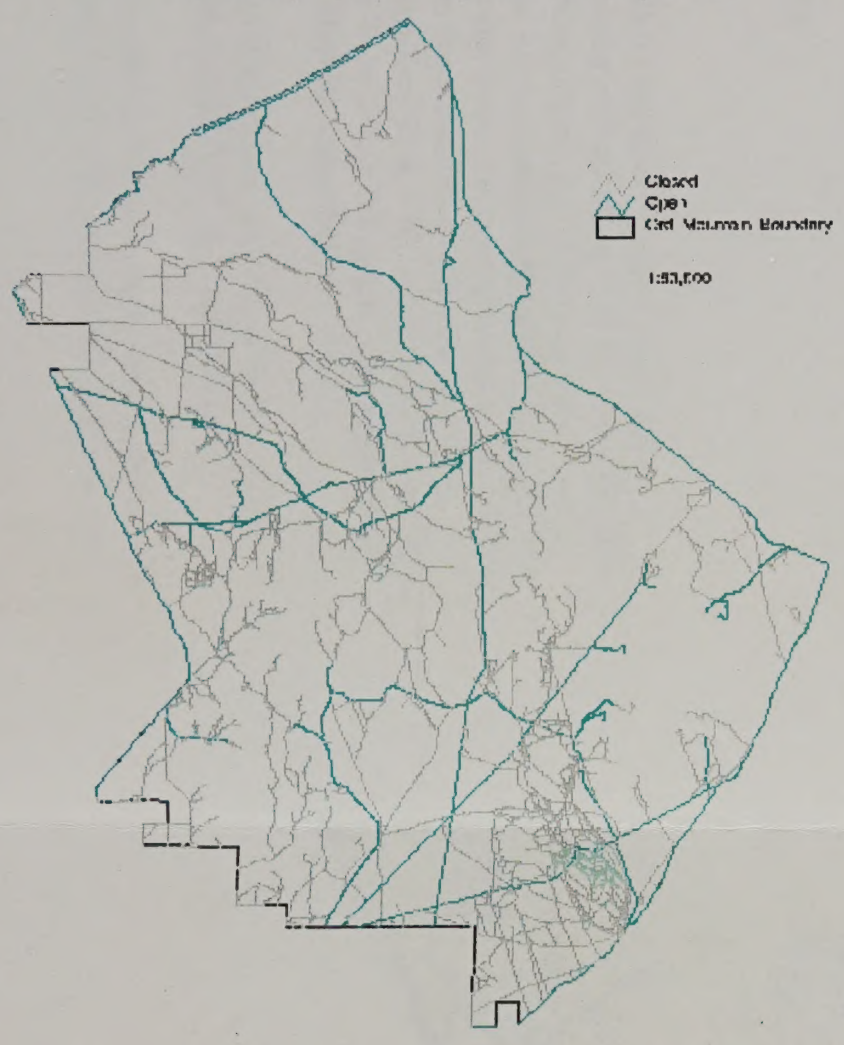
One land use plan covers the public land planning unit addressed in the Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Designation Environmental Assessment. This plan, as amended, is the California Desert Conservation Area, or CDCA, Plan.

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if it is in conformance with the existing land use plan, as required by 43 CFR 1610.5. Under **43 CFR 8342.1**, designations are to be based on the protection of the resources of the public lands; the promotion of the safety of all the users of the public lands; and to minimize the conflicts among various users of the public lands. They must also be in accordance with the following criteria:

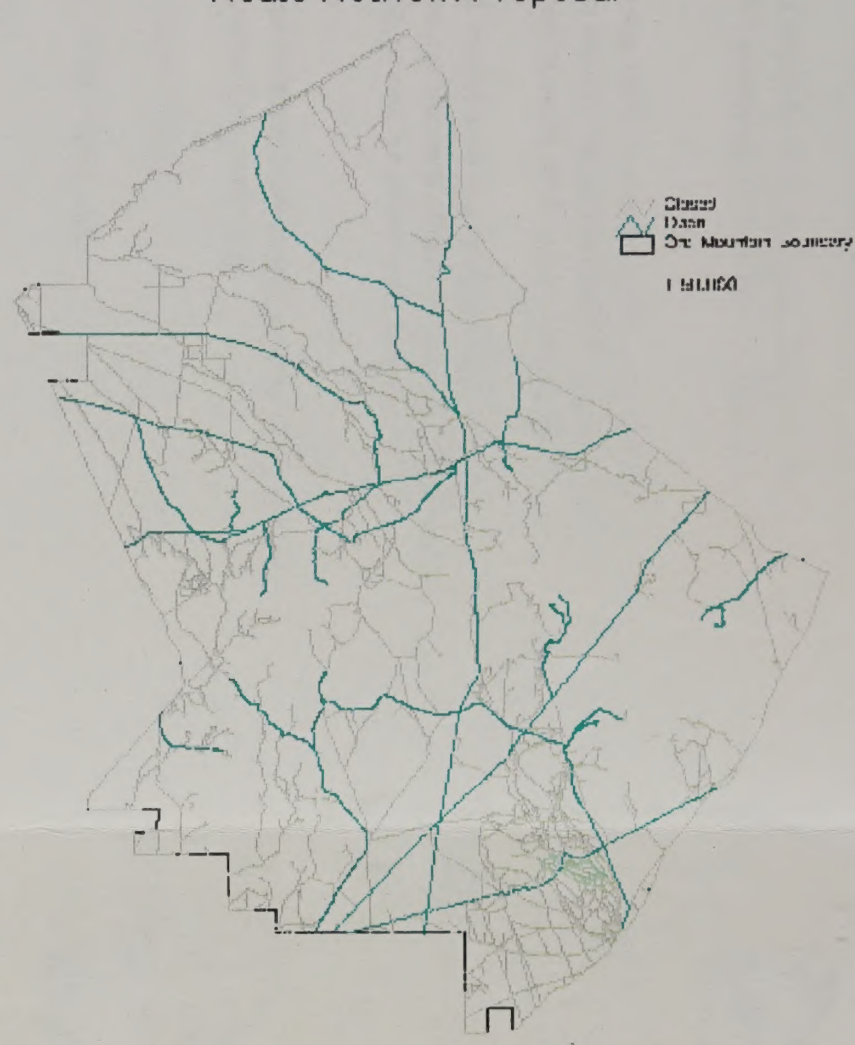
Figure 4: Recommened Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Networks

Ord Mountain Planning Unit
Vehicle Access Network Project

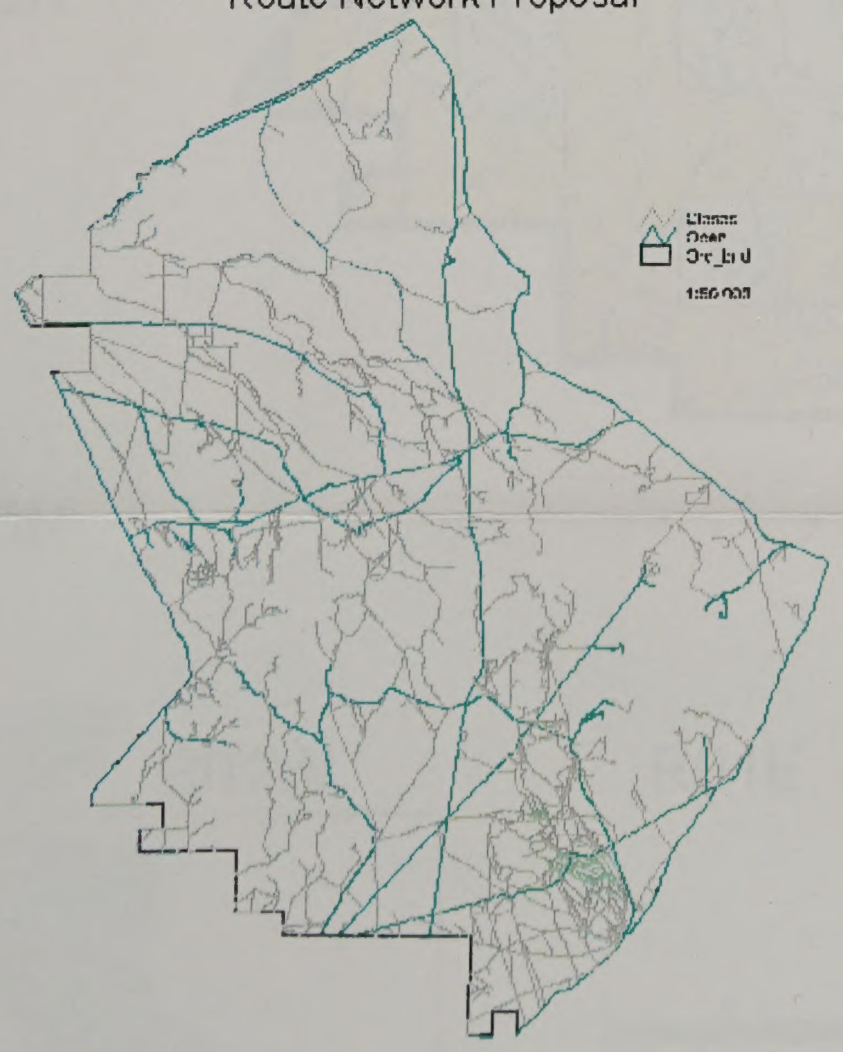
Southwest Center for Biological Diversity Route Network Proposal



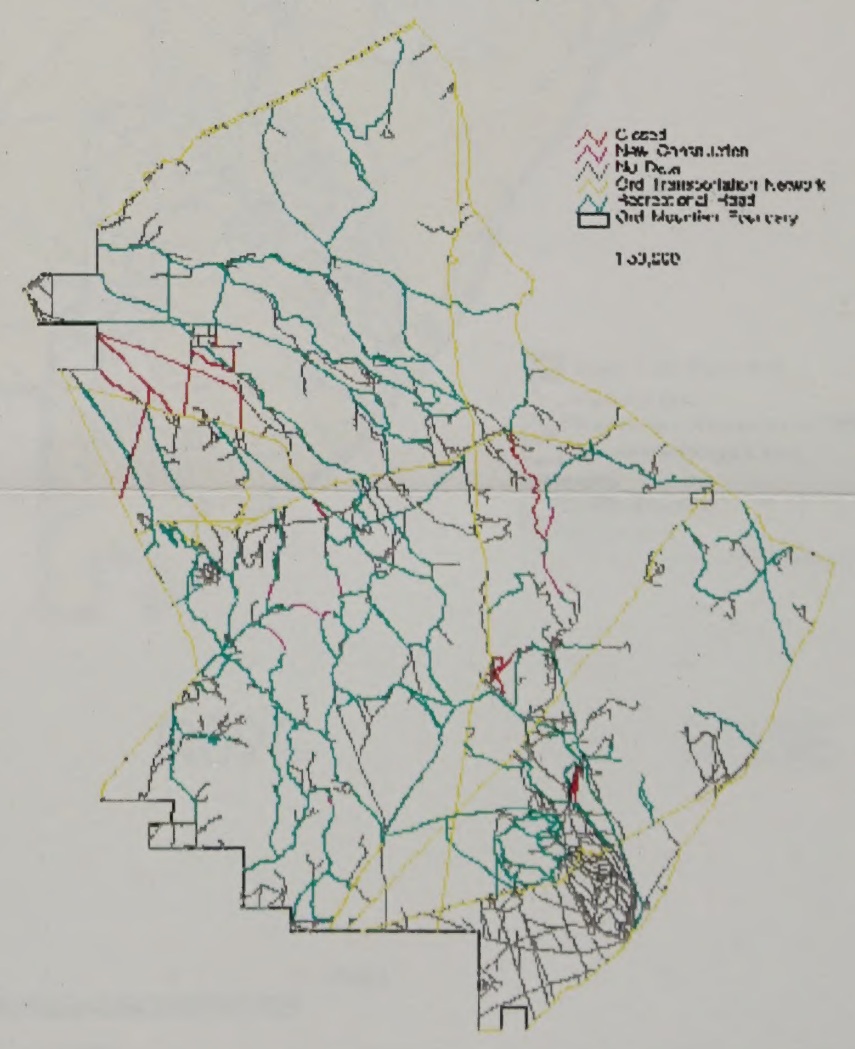
Desert Tortoise Council Route Network Proposal



California Native Plant Society Route Network Proposal



Off-Highway Vehicle Community Route Network Proposal



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a. **Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;**

b. **Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;**

c. **Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between OHV use and other existing recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to ensure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and**

d. **Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas, only, if the authorized officer determines that use in such locations will not adversely affect the natural, aesthetic, scenic or other values they were established for.**

Three pertinent resource management plans, including two land use plans with environmental assessments, and one recovery plan developed for a State and federally listed animal species, were also reviewed:

1. ***Johnson Valley Off-highway Vehicle Area Management Plan*** (BLM 1992);

2. ***Stoddard Valley Off-highway Vehicle Area Management Plan*** (BLM 1993); and

3. ***Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan*** (FWS 1994).

The proposed action of designation and implementation of the Ord Mountain Route Network, is in conformance with the two former land use plans and implements several planned actions set forth in both management plans, as well as several recommendations detailed in the latter recovery plan.

VI. PROPOSED ACTION AND NO ACTION ALTERNATIVES

The **Proposed Action** involves:

1) **Designation of 547 vehicle route miles on public lands** within the Ord Mountain Planning Unit (**Figure 1, Appendix VIII**) as either **open (152.9 miles)** or **limited (14.1 miles)**, as depicted on **Maps C & E**; or **closed (380 miles)**, as depicted on **Map D**. Routes identified for closure would be rehabilitated, per criteria specified in the CDCA Plan's Motor Vehicle Element and Multiple Use Class guidelines. All designations would be based on **CFR criteria and plans listed above**, as well as abiotic resources (**Figure 6**) and biotic resources present in the planning unit (**Map Set B1-3, Appendix I**). Designations would also be based on the usefulness of affected routes for transportation and recreation access (**Figures 3 & 5, Maps A & C, Appendices II & VII**). Designations would also incorporate recommendations from the Ord Mountain Technical Review Team Effort (**Figure 4, Appendices I-IV**) and the Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan (**Figure 2, Map B2, Appendices I & IX**).

2) **Signing and maintenance of designated open routes** in a manner facilitating easy understanding and public acceptance, including considerations for gates, parking/turn-around areas (**Figure 5, Map E, Appendix V**).

3) **Rehabilitation of portions of closed routes** in a cost-efficient manner, designed to eliminate signs of recent human use and to promote soil/vegetative parameters conducive to desert tortoise and other sensitive species' use within the planning unit (**Map D/Appendix VI**).

4) **Providing private land easement recommendations for 13.8 vehicle route miles (Figure 5, Map E)**, which when acquired by the BLM or a third party as proposed herein, would finalize the proposed vehicle access route network for the planning unit over time.

It is outside the scope of this project to revise the existing land use plan, or to make commitments to acquire private land easements. Consequently, CDCA plan specifications for camping and parking, and specific commitments or **procedures to acquire private land easements are not addressed in this document**.

The **No Action** Alternative would result in a **continuation of the current network of 122.4 open route miles** identified in an emergency designation effort (**Figure 3**). It would also include an additional **2 open route miles** (SJ34/SJ35) to provide vehicle access to "Sweetwater Canyon" and "Finger Rock", as well as recognize **3.5 limited use route miles** (SJL4/SJL8), which provide vehicle access to a communications site and wildlife water catchment area. This alternative would serve as a vehicle to allow for public comment on the existing network and analyzes potential impacts of implementing open route signing/maintenance, similar to that discussed in component (2) of the Proposed Action. It also allows for public comment on proposed route reclamation, similar to that discussed in component (3) of the Proposed Action, of **419.1 closed route miles** identified in the existing vehicle access route network. However, BLM acquisition of route easements across private land would not be attempted with the No Action Alternative.

Other alternatives were considered (Figure 4), but individually were dismissed from further analysis, as they did not fully meet the project's primary goal. That is: **promotion of desert tortoise recovery; minimization of adverse impacts to sensitive species and unique features; facilitation of consensus among affected interests; and due provision for vehicle access**, as well as compatible multiple uses, per CDCA guidelines. However, **every attempt was made to integrate components of these recommended alternatives into the Proposed Action**.

Several options were considered for each route addressed in both the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative. Each route could be designated open, closed or limited. These options could be applied to several segments of a route. The length of segments designated was also variable. When multiple routes were present in an analysis area, considering different combinations of vehicle route access broadened options. **The Proposed Action and No Action Alternative describe a range of options** that strive to fulfill goals specified in the CDCA Plan's Motorized Vehicle Access, Wildlife, Vegetation and Cultural Elements. Both the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative also strive to incorporate recommendations from the Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan, as well as incorporate ORD Mountain TRT recommendations, where feasible (**Appendices I-VII**).

Supplemental Details of the Proposed Action:

The **Proposed Action** is to:

1a. **Designate all existing routes on public lands within the Ord Mountain Planning Unit**, per the NARSC 1996 route inventory, as open, limited or closed routes of travel (refer to **Map E:** ***Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network***). The ability of the BLM Field Manager to specifically authorize vehicle access within the planning unit, per applicable environmental analysis guidelines, laws, regulations and existing management plans, would not be affected by this action. The cumulative route designations for the project area, including the proposed additions to the existing route network (refer to **Map C:** ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***), would yield **152.9 route miles designated as open**; **14.1 miles designated as limited use**; and **380 miles designated as closed**. An additional **115 miles of vehicle routes were left undesignated**, as they occur on private land.

1b. **Recognize that any and all routes of travel on public lands within the Ord Mountain Planning Unit not specifically addressed by this or previous route designations would be formally designated as closed routes.** Additionally, recognize that the public has a continuing ability to nominate a designated closed route for open designation, or a designated open route for closed designation, per the CDCA Plan, on an individual basis in the annual CDCA route network update-plan amendment process. Each route proposal would be evaluated for environmental effects and subject to public review and comment. Similarly, future options to designate specific routes, based on monitoring data, access or resource protection need, would continue to be available to BLM Field Managers.

2. **Sign and maintain designated open and limited routes on public lands within the Ord Mountain Planning Unit** in a manner facilitating easy understanding and public safety, as well as in a manner designed to maximize general visitor acceptance (**Appendix V**). Where absolutely necessary, closed routes would also be signed. Sign installation would be planned per vehicle line-of-site where such signing would not cause undue visual impacts or specified distance intervals of +/-0.25-0.5 mile. Route maintenance activities would include minimization of slope extremes on specific routes to be designated open. Road-berm height maintenance objectives would be set at 0.5-1 foot above the roadbed, along designated open route edges that intersect designated closed routes.

Following consultation with affected landowners and/or lessees, as well as site clearance by appropriate BLM specialists, small fences with gates would be installed on public lands at a few intersections of limited use and open routes. Only vehicle use of affected lands would be limited and appropriate pedestrian pursuits on public land portions of these routes would be unaffected. Similarly, following BLM specialist site clearance, **boulder barrier installation and/or grading of disturbed ground on public lands would occur at the terminus of a limited number of one way routes,** to enhance vehicle turn-around and parking safety.

3a. **Rehabilitate portions of designated closed routes occurring on public lands** in a cost-efficient manner, designed to eliminate signs of recent human use and to promote tortoise and sensitive species habitat parameters, within this planning unit. The goal of closed route rehabilitation would be to eliminate signs of a previous route use; to the visual horizon where feasible (**Appendix VI**). Only route reclamation efforts not resulting in adverse impacts to threatened and endangered species, or effects to cultural resources, would be addressed in this Proposed Action. Site specific surveys would be conducted to assess the potential for natural and cultural resource impact prior to any ground disturbing activities.

Should BLM site clearance indicate a potential for adverse modification of suitable desert tortoise habitat, tortoise handling or other form of tortoise "take", a separate EA and all Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation requirements would be fulfilled at that time. Likewise, should reclamation of a specific closed route potentially result in effects to cultural resources, a separate EA and all National Historic Preservation Act Section 106-consultation requirements would be completed.

All involved personnel would be required to attend a **training program** focused on desert tortoise, sensitive species and cultural resources, provided by BLM specialists. **No tortoise handling, adverse modification of suitable tortoise habitat, or impact to cultural resources would be permitted for any facet of route reclamation until a separate EA, Section 7 Consultation per the Endangered Species Act and/or Section 106 consultation per the National Historic Preservation Act, were completed.**

Closed route rehabilitation efforts are not anticipated to result in adverse impacts to sensitive species or cultural resources. These efforts would be occurring within the confines of designated closed vehicle routes, or on the disturbed soil shoulder of such routes. One or more of the following road rehabilitation techniques would be used in the majority of anticipated route reclamation efforts:

3b. **Placement of live or dead vegetation in a vertical fashion within the confines of route or roadbed soil disturbance, in a manner designed to conform to adjacent terrain and vegetation.** This technique is often referred to as "Vertical Mulching," and can also involve placement of boulders as well as dead and down vegetation upon the disturbed soil portion of affected roadbeds. Only vegetation, rock and woody structure native to the immediate closed route vicinities would be used in this effort.

Collection and installation of such mulching material would occur under the supervision of a qualified natural resource specialist, archeologist, biologist or technician. Areas adjacent to where route closure/rehabilitation is planned would occasionally be used to gather dead vertical mulching material, in a manner designed not to create local dead and down habitat loss. In no situation would shrubs that shade animal burrows of any kind be removed for mulching material. Dead & down native vegetation and live native vegetation from the planning area region, salvaged from land clearing operations, would also occasionally be used as mulching material.

3c. Use of **pitting, ripping or other scarification techniques within the confines of route or roadbed soil disturbance, in specific instances** where road de-compaction of designated closed routes is necessary for rapid site recovery. Such scarification could occur with hand-tool work or through the use of heavy equipment and machinery (toothed rake, pitter or similar device pulled by a tractor).

In addition to the education & training component described above for proposed route rehabilitation work, the latter **heavy equipment use would require either a qualified biological and/or cultural resource monitor overseeing such work during the active desert tortoise season or March 15 to November 15.** Alternatively, heavy equipment use could be encouraged to occur in the inactive desert tortoise season (November 16 to March 14), following a site clearance by applicable agency resource specialists. **Such a monitor would be required during the active tortoise season to ensure no desert tortoises wandered into active machinery areas and to ensure no tortoise burrows would be disturbed by such work.** Such a monitor would also be required to ensure the machinery operator is aware of instances where machinery operations must cease to allow for tortoises to leave work sites and/or potentially dangerous situations on their own accord.

In operations where soil is excavated, either by hand or machine, for all aspects of route reclamation proposed herein, **work would be required to cease if human remains or cultural items are discovered**. Work would not be allowed to proceed until such time as the Field Manager specifically authorized resumed operations.

3d. **Installation of small gates, fences and boulder barriers across the entrances to limited and closed routes, following site clearance by applicable agency resource specialists.** All rehabilitation personnel would be required to participate in a resource **education/training program provided by agency Specialists**. Some specific small gate, fence and/or boulder barrier installation actions may also require Resource Monitors if so prescribed by applicable agency resource specialists in their clearance efforts. All areas where boulders would be removed for use in specific barrier installation actions would similarly require applicable BLM clearance.

4. **Monitor open route conditions, signage and reclamation progress of designated closed routes throughout the approved route network in a regularly scheduled fashion**, perhaps semi-annually; and implement corrective actions on public lands accordingly, in a timely manner, per guidelines set forth in the CDCA Plan.

Supplemental Details of the No Action Alternative:

The **No Action Alternative** would:

1a. **Retain the emergency vehicle access route network currently in force within the Ord Mountain Planning Unit (Figure 3)**. The ability of the BLM Field Manager to specifically authorize additional vehicle access, per applicable environmental analysis guidelines, laws, regulations and existing management plans, would be unaffected. This would include approximately **124.4 miles of routes designated as open**; **3.5 miles designated as limited**; and **419.1 miles designated as closed**, per a slightly modified Emergency Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network (see above). Similar to the Proposed Action, **115 miles of vehicle routes within the planning unit would be left undesignated**, as they occur on private lands.

1b. **Recognize that any and all routes of travel located on public land not specifically addressed by this or previous route designations within the planning unit would be formally designated as closed routes.** Additionally, recognize that the public has a continuing ability to nominate a designated closed route for open designation, or a designated open route for closed designation, per the CDCA Plan, on an individual basis in the annual CDCA route network update-plan amendment process.

Each route proposal would be evaluated for environmental effects and subject to public review and comment. Similarly, options to designate, close or update specific travel routes based on monitoring data, access or resource protection need would continue to be available to the BLM Field Manager.

2. **Sign and maintain designated open and limited routes on public lands within the Ord Mountain Planning Unit** in a manner facilitating easy understanding and public safety, as well as in a manner designed to maximize general visitor acceptance (**Appendix V**). Sign installation would be planned per vehicle line-of-site or specified distance intervals of +/- 0.25 mile. Route maintenance activities would include minimization of slope extremes on specific routes to be designated open. Roadberm height maintenance objectives would be set at 1 foot above the roadbed, along designated open route edges that intersect designated closed routes.

Following consultation with affected landowners and/or lessees, as well as site clearance by appropriate BLM specialists, small fences with gates would be constructed on public lands at a few intersections of limited use and open routes. Only vehicle use of affected lands would be limited and appropriate pedestrian pursuits on public land portions of these routes would be unaffected. Similarly, following BLM specialist site clearance, **boulder barrier installation and/or grading of disturbed ground on public lands would also occur at the terminus of a limited number of one way routes,** to enhance vehicle turnaround and parking safety.

3. **Rehabilitate portions of designated closed routes on public lands within the Ord Mountain Planning Unit** in a cost-efficient manner, designed to eliminate signs of recent human use. This would be done in a manner conducive to promotion of suitable tortoise habitat parameters, as well as other identified sensitive species' habitats, as described in the Proposed Action above and **Appendix VI**.

4. **Monitor open route conditions, signage and reclamation progress of designated closed routes throughout the final approved route network in a regularly scheduled fashion**, perhaps annually.

VII. OTHER AFFECTED LANDS

Public lands within the Planning Area are intermingled with lands either privately owned or controlled by the State of California (State Lands Commission Sections). The proposed route network, designation and implementation recommendations only apply to lands managed by the BLM. However, acquisition of specific easements on existing roads across some of these lands would facilitate aspects of the overall network and are recommended herein (refer to **Map E: *Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network***). The owners/managers of private lands can at any time close or restrict the use of segments of routes across their property. Though vehicle use on these routes has already occurred, and is an ongoing activity, acquisition of specific road segment easements would legitimize this vehicle use. **Acquisition of the route segments recommended herein would also protect the public's ability to use all aspects of the vehicle access route network over time.**

Route **designation does not affect the county's prerogatives or responsibilities for designated San Bernardino County roads**. Nor does the public land designation affect laws and ordinances that apply to San Bernardino County roads. The designation as a route of travel does permit the BLM to spend funds signing the route and to show the route on BLM maps as part of the California Desert District's transportation system (under development).

VIII. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Location and Setting

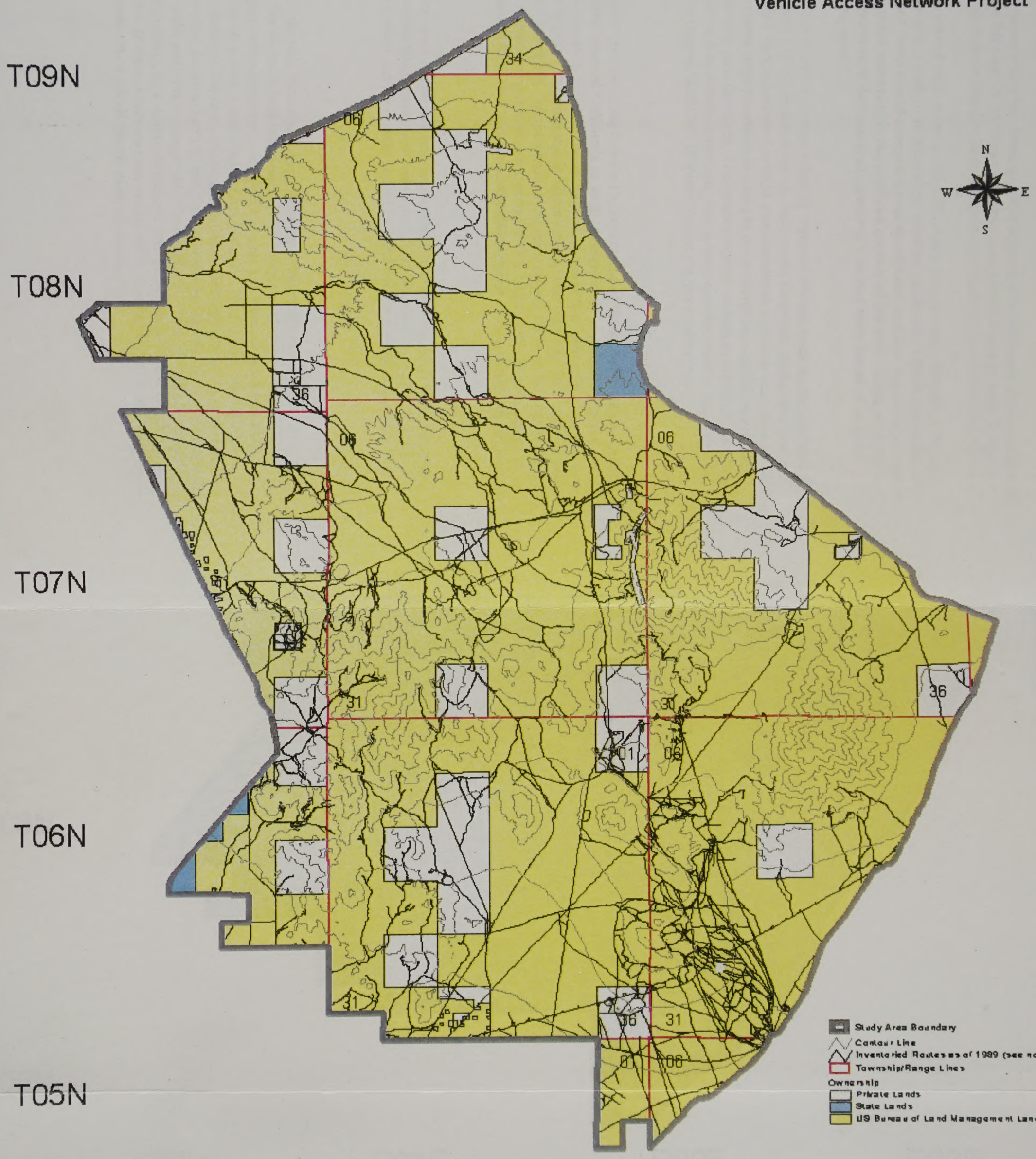
The **Ord Mountain Planning Unit** covers approximately 124,988 acres (195.3 sq. mi.) in San Bernardino County. Of this acreage, 102,135 acres (159.6 sq. mi.) are public lands administered by the BLM's Barstow Field Office as an integral part of the **California Desert Conservation Area (Figure 5)**. A total of 881 acres (1.4 sq. mi.) are owned by the State and 21,972 acres (34.3 sq. mi.) are privately owned. A detailed description of the affected environment can be found in **Appendix I**, as well as in adjacent BLM planning unit plans (Section V).

Ord, East Ord and West Ord Mountains, as well as Daggett Ridge, East Stoddard and North Lucerne Valleys are included within this planning unit. Elevations range from 2,400 feet above sea level to over 6,309 feet above sea level on Ord Mountain. **The Stoddard Valley Off-highway Vehicle Area**, Stoddard Ridge and Sidewinder Mountain form the western border of the Planning Area. The **Newberry Mountains Wilderness** and the **Johnson Valley Off-highway Vehicle Area** are located to the east. A power-line road is located to the north and Lucerne Valley to the south. Existing vehicle routes within this planning unit total 662 linear miles, with roughly 40% considered primarily transportation or thoroughfare-oriented. A 1996 BLM route change detection GIS analysis for this planning unit also documented a 28% increase in the linear extent of all vehicle routes occurring in the unit, for the period 1977-89. None of these routes were officially designated or approved.

High use truck routes, consisting primarily of those routes identified in the emergency route network developed for the area, **constituted roughly a third (38%) of the routes observed in this planning unit**. This was according to an extensive, 1997 Desert Tortoise Council (DTC) study of the Ord Mountain area. **Low use truck routes, primarily consisting of abandoned mine access roads (17%), indiscernible routes (4%) and motorcycle routes (12%) constituted another third of the routes** observed in this study. **Routes within washes constituted the remaining third (29%)** of those routes noted in this study.

Figure 5: Ord Mountain Planning Unit Topography and Ownership

Ord Mountain Planning Unit
Vehicle Access Network Project



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1 0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

1. This map represents a 100% vehicle route inventory as of 1989.

The Ord Mountain Pilot Project is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Barstow, California in San Bernardino County. The total area within the project boundary is 124,988 acres (195.3 square miles). Of this area, 102,135 acres (159.6 square miles) are managed by the BLM, 21,972 acres (34.3 square miles) are privately owned, and 881 acres (1.4 square miles) are state lands.

The route inventory portrayed on this map represents 662 linear miles of roads and trails that were inventoried through remote sensing techniques from 1989 imagery. Of these routes, 547 miles are on BLM lands, 112.1 miles are on private lands, and 2.9 miles are on state lands.

Although this study did not analyze all routes within the planning unit, it appears to be **extremely representative of the past and present route uses within this unit**. A 100% route analysis is suspected to mirror the DTC study percentages, though cycle/wash route percentages together likely comprise two thirds of all routes within this unit.

Sand was found to be the prevalent substrate of wash routes in this DTC study, though rocky substrates (7%) and hard-packed dirt (10%) characterized roughly a sixth of all wash route substrates analyzed. "**Wash substrates in the northern portion of this unit tended toward light-colored, fine-grained sand and also appeared less stable and not as easily compacted as wash sands occurring in the southern portion of the unit. Wash sands in the southern portion of the unit also tended toward dark-colored, coarse-grains and were found to be more frequently compacted than those in the north**".

Route widths, per the DTC study, were also found to average 9 feet for high and low use truck routes; less than 2 feet wide for cycle routes; and ranged from 3 to 120 feet in width on wash routes surveyed. **Eighty five percent (85%) of high use truck routes surveyed were considered to be in good condition** and none were considered to be poor condition. **Most (44%) wash routes were identified as being in poor condition**, with another fifteen percent (15%) characterized as in moderately poor condition. Topography aspects, as well as vehicle straying and concealment, or rehabilitation, potentials related to route designation issues were also described in the 1997 DTC study and this data was referred to in developing the BLM's Proposed Action for this planning unit.

Climate

Barstow and the surrounding "High Desert" portion of the Mojave Desert **are one of the hottest areas in California and often are the driest and windiest areas of California as well**. Average daily maximum temperatures rise to 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more approximately 100 days out of the year. Average low, generally night, temperatures for the same period are in the 50s and 60s. Temperatures in winter months average in the 50s and 60s, with low night temperatures dropping to the 20s and 30s. Temperatures in the mountainous areas of the Mojave Desert average about 10 to 15 degrees lower. Annual precipitation averages below five inches and generally occurs in winter months. **Violent thunderstorms and flash floods occasionally characterize late summer and fall months**.

Land Status

Public lands managed by the BLM, State lands and private lands characterize land ownership of this planning unit. A total of 11,835 acres of private land within this planning unit has recently been acquired by the BLM. The Catellus Corporation (7,965 acres) and a small number of individuals (13,852 acres) own remaining private land acreage.

Vegetation

Several vegetative communities occur in the unit, including the predominant **Creosote Bush Scrub**, at low to moderate elevations. **Desert Saltbush Scrub** and **Alkali Playa** occur at the lowest elevations. **Mojave Mixed Woody Scrub** and **Mojave Mixed Steppe** occur at moderate to high elevations and **Blackbrush Scrub** occurs at the highest elevations. **Mojave Wash Scrub** occurs in area washes (Appendix I). The fragrant smell of Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*), the prickly thorns of Catclaw (*Acacia greggii*) and the bright green color of Sweetbush (*Bebbia juncea*) characterize this community. Riparian habitats and flowing water springs too, infrequently emerge in brilliant green pockets along canyon walls and valley edges of this Planning Unit. These riparian plant communities are characterized, when functioning properly, by a variety of wetland emergents, Black Willow (*Salix nigra*), Seep-willow (*Baccharis* spp.) Arizona Ash (*Fraxinus velutina*) and occasionally introduced Cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*); and can best be termed **Transmontane Alkali Marsh** plant communities.

Many of these riparian areas, which are associated with **springs in the planning unit, have been altered to a point of non-functionality as the result of historic mining and livestock operations**. Most no longer support a native riparian plant community and some may have even come into existence as the result of deep mineshaft installation. However, where restoration work and fencing to prohibit livestock and vehicle entry have occurred, functionality has improved and native vegetation has rebounded. State Fish and Game Code prohibits human visitation in excess of 30 minutes within 300 feet of these, and all wildlife waters, including wildlife water catchments (or "guzzlers").

Four Unusual Plant Assemblages, or UPAs, occur within this planning unit, including the: **Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Ring UPA**, the **Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone UPA**, the **East Ord Mountain Jojoba UPA** and the **Desert Spring Riparian UPA** previously described.

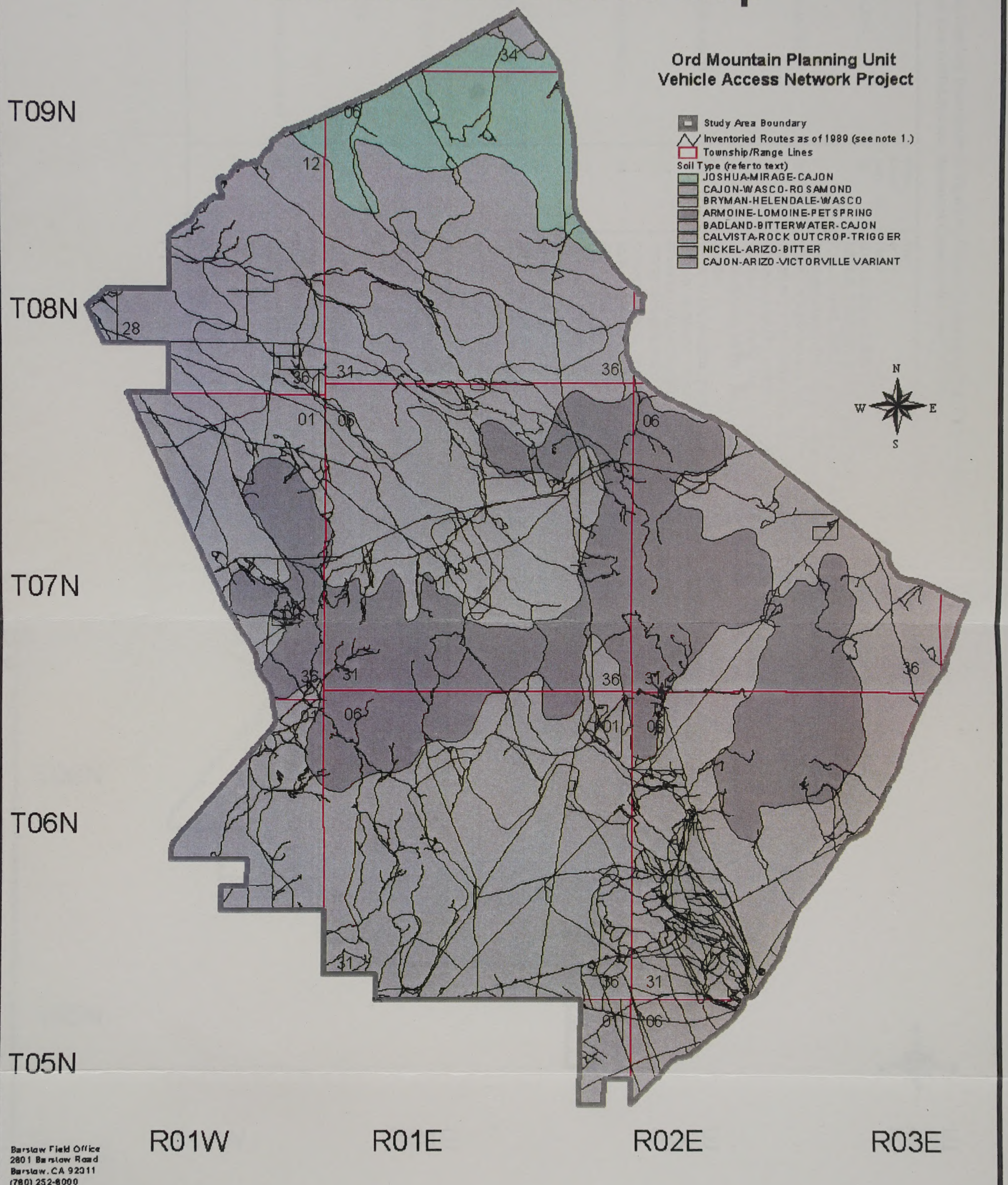
The former two clonal growth UPAs were designated by the BLM and **include some of the oldest known yucca and creosote clonal assemblages**, or rings. One such creosote clonal ring was estimated to be over 10,000 years of age, whereas one clonal yucca ring was estimated to be over 6,000 years of age. Two small, fenced ACECs located outside this planning unit, have been designated as representative protection areas for these UPAs. The **Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone UPA** is located primarily on the lower elevations of the southeastern portion of this planning unit, whereas the **Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Ring UPA** is located primarily on the moderate to high elevations of the south and central portions of this planning unit.

The **East Ord Jojoba UPA** was so designated to acknowledge and protect possibly the northernmost native population of **jojoba** (*Simmondsia chinensis*). A few jojoba have been damaged in this relatively small wash area over the years, as the result of vehicle travel and livestock bedding. However, a protective UPA fence has recently been installed. Current monitoring of these UPAs/ACECs occurs only as time and personnel permit.

Although no State or federally listed threatened or endangered plant species occur within the planning unit, two BLM designated sensitive plant species (Table 1) have been recorded: **Mojave Monkeyflower** (*Mimulus mohavensis*) and **Curved-pod Mojave Milkvetch** (*Astragalus mohavensis* var. *hemigyrus*). However, the latter carbonaceous substrate-associated milkvetch species has been only informally recorded from the Goat Spring vicinity, and has not been confirmed to date. The former monkeyflower species has been confirmed in washes within the northern portion of the Planning Area. It also has been confirmed on the lower slopes of hills located adjacent to washes. At one time, both plants were considered for listing as endangered species.

Invasive, non-native plants of this planning unit include several Mediterranean annual grasses and forbs, such as Brome Grass (*Bromus madritensis*, *B. tectorum*, *B. trinii*), Split Grass (*Schismus barbatus*, *S. arabicus*) and two mustards (*Brassica nigra*, *B. tournefortii*). Although these exotic annual species are largely naturalized, precipitation and fire patterns can influence their overall abundance. These plants are primarily established in the Creosote Bush Scrub plant community, and to a lesser extent in the Mixed Mojave Woody Scrub and Mojave Mixed Steppe plant communities. Extensive research has been undertaken in the planning unit and adjacent region which documents a positive correlation between areas of high native plant species richness, density and biomass and areas of low alien plant abundance. Furthermore, **alien plant species richness and biomass have been found to be generally higher than that of natives, where soil nutrients are relatively high, such as areas located adjacent to roads**. Research has also documented a decline in alien plant species richness in areas radiating out from roads. **Mojave Desert fire frequency appears to be most prevalent in areas where these alien plants are established**. If burned repeatedly, creosote and mixed woody scrublands are often type-converted to exotic annual grass fields. Recent research has shown that alien annual grasses contribute more than alien or native forbs to the frequency and cover of fine fuels. It has also been demonstrated that both the alien forb *Bromus* and the alien grass *Schismus* carry flames across the landscape.

Figure 6: Ord Mountain Planning Unit
Affected Area Soils Map



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1. This map represents a 100% vehicle route inventory as of 1989.

The Ord Mountain Pilot Project is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Barstow, California in San Bernardino County. The total area within the project boundary is 124,988 acres (195.3 square miles). Of this area, 102,135 acres (159.6 square miles) are managed by the BLM, 21,972 acres (34.3 square miles) are privately owned, and 881 acres (1.4 square miles) are state lands.

The route inventory portrayed on this map represents 662 linear miles of roads and trails that were inventoried through remote sensing techniques from 1989 imagery. Of these routes, 547 miles are on BLM lands, 112.1 miles are on private lands, and 2.9 miles are on state lands.

Table 2. Ord Mountain Planning Unit Soil Types (refer to Figure 6). From Miscellaneous Publication Number 1492, State Soil Geographic Data Base (USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service 1994).

Map Unit Number	Map Unit Name	Major Land Area	Type or Class
CA617	JOSHUA-MIRAGE-CAJON	30	HAPLIC DURAGIDS, FINE-LOAMY, MIXED, THERMIC; TYPIC HAPLARGIDS, FINE-LOAMY, MIXED, THERMIC; & TYPIC TORRIPSAMMENTS, MIXED, THERMIC.
CA635	CAJON-WASCO-ROSAMOND	30	TYPIC TORRIPSAMMENTS, MIXED, THERMIC; TYPIC TORRIORTHENTS, COARSE-LOAMY, MIXED, NONACID, THERMIC; & TYPIC TORRIFLUVENTS, FINE-LOAMY, MIXED (CALCAREOUS), MESIC.
CA644	BRYMAN-HELENDALE-WASCO	30	TYPIC HAPLARGIDS, FINE-LOAMY, MIXED, THERMIC; TYPIC HAPLARGIDS, COARSE-LOAMY, MIXED, THERMIC; & TYPIC TORRIORTHENTS, COARSE-LOAMY, MIXED, NONACID, THERMIC.
CA782	ARMOINE-LOMOINE-PETSPRING	29	XEROLLIC HAPLARGIDS, LOAMY-SKELETAL, MIXED, MESIC, SHALLOW; LITHIC XERIC TORRIORTHENTS, LOAMY-SKELETAL, MIXED (CALCAREOUS), MESIC; & XERIC TORRIORTHENTS, LOAMY-SKELETAL, MIXED, NONACID, MESIC, SHALLOW.
CA910	BADLAND-BITTERWATER-CAJON	30	WEATHERED BEDROCK; TYPIC TORRIORTHENTS, COARSE-LOAMY, MIXED (CALCAREOUS), THERMIC; & TYPIC TORRIPSAMMENTS, MIXED, THERMIC.
CA919	CALVISTA-ROCK OUTCROP-TRIGGER	30	LITHIC CAMBORTHIDS, LOAMY, MIXED, THERMIC; ROCK OUTCROP; & LITHIC TORRIORTHENTS, LOAMY, MIXED (CALCAREOUS), THERMIC.
CA930	NICKEL-ARIZO-BITTER	30	TYPIC CALCIORTHIDS, LOAMY-SKEL ETAL, MIXED, THERMIC; TYPIC TORRIORTHENTS, SANDY-SKELETAL, MIXED, THERMIC; & TYPIC HAPLARGIDS, LOAMY-SKELETAL, MIXED, THERMIC.
CA931	CAJON-ARIZO-VICTORVILLE VARIANT	30	TYPIC TORRIPSAMMENTS, MIXED, THERMIC; TYPIC TORRIORTHENTS, SANDY-SKELETAL, MIXED, MESIC, SHALLOW; & TYPIC TORRIFLUVENTS, COARSE-LOAMY, CALCAREOUS, THERMIC.

IX. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action has been analyzed in a manner designed to assess direct, indirect, residual and cumulative impacts to critical elements of the human environment listed below. Those elements not present or affected by the proposed action are checked "No". **Affected elements are checked "Yes" and discussed in further detail following the checklist.**

Critical Element Affected	Yes	No	Initial
ACECs		X	TBE
Air Quality		X	EMS
Cultural Resources	X		SCC
Environmental Justice		X	EMS
Farmlands, Prime/Unique		X	RAC
Floodplains		X	TBE
Invasive, Non-native Species	X		RAC
Native American Religious Concerns		X	SCC
Public Health and Safety	X		TBE
Recreation	X		BB
Sensitive Vegetation	X		TBE
Sensitive Wildlife	X		TBE
Soils/Erosion	X		RAC
T&E Wildlife	X		TBE
T&E Vegetation		X	TBE
Visual Resources	X		DF
Water Quality		X	TBE
Wastes, Hazardous/Solid		X	EMS
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	X		TBE
Wild and Scenic Rivers		X	TBE

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources can be extremely fragile in nature and subtle in appearance. These characteristics lend themselves to inadvertent damage and/or destruction by vehicle travel. Artifacts and rock alignments are sometimes difficult to see at ground level and have been damaged in other areas by vehicular usage. **Routes leading to, through, or terminating at, areas of known sensitivity, increase the possibility of inadvertent and intentional damage to cultural resources.** Previous impacts to sites within the project area have been documented. A few existing routes traverse known archaeological sites, with several terminating at identified historic period mining sites.

The existing protocol between the BLM and the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), developed in 1998, **specifically exempts the following activities specific to transportation/visitor access to public lands from National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 review/consultation:**

1. Vehicular closures or designations limited to existing roads and trails,
2. Installation of routine signs or markers on shoulders of existing roads, and
3. Placement of recreational, special information signs, portable kiosks and sanitation devices.

Nonetheless, BLM BFO records of known and formally recorded prehistoric and historic archaeological cultural sites were reviewed for each route recommendation. No new specific cultural surveys were conducted for the Proposed Action, but site knowledge gained from previous field examinations in this planning unit was incorporated into this analysis.

A total of 152.9 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 14.1 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 380 miles of routes would be designated closed, within the planning unit, as a result of the Proposed Action. Similar to the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would add **2 open route miles** (SJ34/SJ35) to the existing emergency route network in order to provide vehicle access to "Sweetwater Canyon" and "Finger Rock" vicinities. It would also recognize **3.5 limited use route miles** (SJL4/SJL8), to provide permitted vehicle access to a communications site on Ord Mountain and a wildlife water catchment area in East Stoddard Valley. Pedestrian use of both of these limited use routes would remain unaffected, allowing for continued hunting and hiking access by foot. The main difference between the two is the Proposed Action's inclusion of additional open and limited use loop and dead-end destination or private lands access routes. It would represent a **28.5-mile increase in open route mileage**; **a 10.6-mile increase in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile decrease in closed route mileage**, in relation to the No Action Alternative.

No additional, specific direct, indirect or residual impacts to cultural resources have been identified within the Proposed Action area. All identified cultural resources would be avoided by project design during route rehabilitation and barrier construction, or would be analyzed and appropriately mitigated under supplemental environmental analysis.

No new adverse impacts to cultural resources are anticipated to occur as a result of the Proposed Action. Operational procedures pertaining to encountering new cultural properties and the protection of known cultural properties have been incorporated into the Proposed Action. These procedures include a requirement for regular field reviews and preparation of a separate environmental analysis, with appropriate Section 106 SHPO consultation if determined necessary, prior to commencement of ground-disturbing activities.

Overall, the Proposed Action does not differ from the No Action Alternative in relation to cultural resource protection and management within this planning unit.

Invasive, Non-native Species

The five annual non-native grasses and two annual non-native mustards mentioned in the Affected Environment Section of this document are collectively considered the invasive, non-native species component for this planning unit, and are addressed herein as such. No new surveys for invasive, non-native species were conducted along any routes associated with this designation effort. Analyses were based on **BLM office records, BLM management plans** for adjacent public land areas, **previous EAs** and **staff familiarity** with terrain, native plant communities and invasive plants occurring in the planning unit.

Invasive plant species common to this planning unit all prefer disturbed sites, thrive in high nitrogen content soils but are not completely limited by low-nitrogen content soils. The seeds of these species are also easily transported from one area to another. They often become established in low numbers in disturbed soil areas like road shoulders, spreading further at varying rates following various degrees and kinds of disturbance, i.e., soil deposition, precipitation events, fire. Under certain circumstances, these non-native plant species can out-compete or even displace native vegetation. Together, **the invasive traits of these plants and the high "invasibility" exhibited by high use routes/roads within a route network bounded by OHV use areas and highways, pose a high potential for non-native plant displacement of native plants in the vicinity of heavily-used route shoulders over time.**

The only known direct impact to invasive, non-native species as a consequence of the Proposed Action would be the **potential facilitation of exotic plant establishment/spread over time along the road shoulders of designated open (152.9 miles) and limited use (14.1 miles) routes.** This would apply particularly so in the vicinity of parking/ turn-around areas. This represents a **28.5-mile increase in open route mileage; a 10.6-mile increase in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile decrease in closed route mileage**, in relation to the No Action Alternative.

Indirect impacts to invasive, non-native species would include **a facilitated potential for vegetative type-conversion of plant communities located adjacent to where these plants occur, in conjunction with recurrent fire.** If fire were to occur, such an influence could result in a range of impact severity, affecting little to large numbers of vegetation adjacent to open routes. In general, non-native species spread out the expense of the natives following recurrent fire, with shrub-lands often replaced with grasslands or "type-converted" in particular areas over time. When dry, such grasslands pose a high-risk potential for fire ignition from both natural fire sources (lightning-ignited) and induced fire sources (spark-ignited from vehicles lacking spark arrestors, escaped campfires or shooting), and generally increase an area's fire regime frequency. **This indirect impact potential is considered higher with the Proposed Action than with the No Action Alternative, based on a larger number of designated open routes**.

Route reclamation efforts proposed in both alternatives would facilitate habitat improvement for native, non-invasive vegetation at several sites and limit further invasive plant spread at others. However, **fewer roads would be reclaimed** with the Proposed Action and the **degree of route reclamation effort/cost would be less**, in comparison to the No Action Alternative. However, surface disturbance, effort and cost associated with gate installation would be higher with the Proposed Action, in comparison to the No Action Alternative.

No residual impacts to invasive, non-native species within this planning unit, potentially resulting from the Proposed Action, have been identified.

Overall, the Proposed Action differs moderately from the No Action Alternative in relation to invasive, non-native species within this planning unit, based on a higher number of routes and a higher anticipated soil disturbance rate associated with the Proposed Action. **A few more "challenge" routes have also been designated open** in this alternative. Use of these routes has a higher potential relative to other routes in the network, to result in minor vehicle damage to supporting adjacent soils and result in the loss of low numbers of individual native plants, due to the challenging terrain features associated with these routes. This disturbance and native plant loss can result in a promotion of conditions conducive to invasive plant establishment/spread. Consequently, the Proposed Action is considered to have **a moderately higher potential for weed establishment and spread, fire and vegetative type conversion in relation to the No Action Alternative**.

<u>Public Health and Safety</u>

BLM BFO records and **knowledge** of health and safety hazards, as well as potential hazards, occurring within this planning unit **were considered for each route recommendation**. No new specific hazard surveys were conducted for the Proposed Action, but site knowledge gained from previous field reviews was incorporated into this analysis. A total of **152.9 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 14.1 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 380 miles of routes would be designated closed** within the planning unit, as a result of the Proposed Action. This would result in a **28.5-mile increase in open route mileage; a 10.6-mile increase in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile decrease in closed route mileage**, in relation to the No Action Alternative.

Direct beneficial impacts to public health and safety would include a **facilitation of the public's ability to know where they are in a specific portion of the planning unit**, as well as to more effectively communicate where they or hazards are, to emergency personnel and BLM rangers. An identification of where a route ends or where a hazard may be encountered would is also considered a direct, positive impact. An improved ability of visitors to turn around at the terminus of a one way route and a limitation of the number of potentially hazardous routes easily mistaken as open, through effective reclamation or concealment of closed routes, are also considered direct, positive impacts. All of these preceding beneficial impacts are anticipated with either the Proposed Action or the No Action Alternative. Direct potentially negative impacts to public health and safety would include recognition of some currently designated closed routes located in challenging terrain as open. As such, these routes have a higher potential for drivers becoming injured or vehicles becoming stranded. However, in general, the **direct impacts of the Proposed Action are considered both positive and extensive**.

Indirect impacts to public health and safety within this planning unit would include a **facilitation of BLM's ability to monitor and remediate public land health and safety issues**. Designated closed vehicle routes, some of which contain hazards, would be "put to bed" and would not need to be periodically patrolled. Search and rescue response times may even be reduced by improved open route signage. Closed route concealment is also anticipated to positively influence search and rescue response time. As with direct impacts, all of these preceding beneficial indirect impacts are anticipated with either the Proposed Action or the No Action Alternative.

Gate costs associated with limited use routes accessing private lands would be slightly higher with this proposal when compared with the No Action Alternative, but route reclamation efforts proposed in both alternatives would facilitate the reduction of some public hazards. **Fewer roads would be reclaimed with the Proposed Action and the degree of route reclamation effort/cost would be less**, in relation to the No Action Alternative. In general, the **indirect impacts of the Proposed Action are considered both positive and extensive**.

No residual impacts to public health and safety within this Planning Unit, potentially resulting from the Proposed Action, have been identified. No new hazards to public health and safety are anticipated to occur as a result of the Proposed Action. **Operational procedures pertaining to public health and safety features, in the course of project implementation, have been incorporated into the Proposed Action**.

Overall, the Proposed Action differs only slightly from the No Action Alternative, in relation to public health and safety issues within this planning unit (refer to **Map C**, ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***). A few more "challenge" or technical vehicle routes have been designated open in this alternative, and a few less routes leading to potentially hazardous areas would be reclaimed. This would result in a slightly higher potential for vehicle damage or inexperienced vehicle drivers becoming stranded or injured on specific routes, in relation to the No Action Alternative.

Recreation

BLM BFO records and maps, TRT recommendations, as well as **staff recreation training, experience and knowledge, were all utilized in evaluating each route recommendation**. No new recreation opportunity surveys along routes were conducted for the Proposed Action. Site/area knowledge gained from previous recreational events, special uses and local community input, were incorporated into this analysis. **A total of 152.9 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 14.1 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 380 miles of routes would be designated closed within the planning unit, as a result of the Proposed Action**. This would result in a **28.5-mile increase in open route mileage**; **a 10.6-mile increase in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile decrease in closed route mileage**, in relation to the No Action Alternative.

Similar to the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would add **2 open route miles** (SJ34/SJ35) to the existing emergency route network in order to provide vehicle access to **"Sweetwater Canyon"** and **"Finger Rock"** vicinities. It would also recognize **3.5 limited use route miles** (SJL4/SJL8), to provide permitted vehicle access to a communications site on Ord Mountain and a wildlife water catchment area in East Stoddard Valley. Pedestrian use of both of these limited use routes would remain unaffected, allowing for continued hunting and hiking access. The main difference between the two is the Proposed Action's inclusion of **additional open and limited use loop and dead-end destination or private lands access routes**.

Many of the routes designated as closed in the 1995 emergency route designation effort (No Action Alternative) have undergone some degree of natural rehabilitation. Some routes have completely disappeared. Many route segments closed in the 1995 effort had no impact upon vehicle recreation because they were very rarely used, were the result of illegal activities or were replaced by new proposed open vehicle route segments. Still other routes had not been used for many years; due to changing public land visitor desires and needs. A few remained desired as recreational routes, but were designated closed. Some, **identified as closed in the 1995 effort remain intact and used in an exploratory fashion today, largely due to a lack of effective on-the-ground closure, i.e., no specific site reclamation or enhancement of designated open routes, non-maintained signage and low degrees of public outreach/environmental education**.

The Proposed Action involved a re-assessment of visitor use patterns occurring throughout the planning unit and an increased emphasis on recreational criteria application, with regard to route designation. The proposed vehicle access network provides several additional varying-challenge loop and dead-end routes above that provided currently, which provide appropriate vehicle access to points of general interest, in a manner minimizing adverse resource impact and which facilitate the widest possible range of recreational opportunity within the planning unit.

Direct recreation impacts would include a moderately increased mileage of designated open routes, in relation to the current Ord Mountain Emergency Vehicle Access Route Network (No Action Alternative), and **a facilitation of the public's ability to know where they are in a specific portion of the planning unit. Direct beneficial impacts would also include an emphasized identification of where a route ends or where a hazard may occur.** Another direct beneficial impact would include **an improved ability to turn around at the terminus of a one way route (vehicle turn-around). Both alternatives would limit the number of potentially hazardous, closed routes easily mistaken as open**, through effective reclamation or concealment of closed routes.
Increased route mileage proposed herein (refer to **Map C**, ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***) would include the following designations:

A. Four (4) open, varying vehicle-challenge, loop routes (**SJ21, SJ28, SJ31, SJ32**) and one (1) open, elementary vehicle-challenge dead-end route (**SJ30**) on the southwestern slope of West Ord Mountain; and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL12**) on the southern slope of West Ord Mountain.

B. One (1) open, moderate vehicle-challenge, loop route (**SJ6**); three (3) open, varying vehicle-challenge, dead-end routes (**SJ12, SJ22, SJ29**); and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL6**) in the central West Ord Mountain vicinity.

C. One (1) open, varying vehicle-challenge, through-route (**SJ15**) in the Ord Mountain Wash-Anita Mine vicinity, that has been used on one past occasion for a "yellow flag" (i.e., controlled non-competitive) portion of a competitive vehicle event held in the two adjacent OHV areas (Johnson to Stoddard Race).

D. Three (3) limited, dead-end routes (**SJL1-3**) and one (1) open, loop route (**SJ4**) within the Daggett and Lenwood Wash vicinities.

E. One (1) open, elementary vehicle-challenge, dead-end route (**SJ34**), terminating in the Sweetwater Canyon vicinity; and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL5**) terminating at Aztec Spring.

F. One (1) limited route (**SJL8**) that is currently gated and provides pedestrian access to the top of Ord Mountain.

G. One (1) open, dead-end route (**SJ11**) and one (1) limited, high vehicle-challenge, dead-end route (**SJL9**) that together could potentially be modified into a loop route; and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL10**), on the southwestern slope of Ord Mountain.

H. One (1) open, moderate vehicle-challenge, loop route (**SJ20-SJ26**); and one (1) open, elementary vehicle-challenge, dead-end route (**SJ26**) in the East Ord Mountain vicinity, overlooking the Johnson Valley OHV Area.

I. One (1) open, elementary vehicle-challenge, dead-end route (**SJ35**) in the Cinnamon Hills, providing access to "Finger Rock".

J. Three (3) open, elementary vehicle-challenge, loop routes (**SJ17, SJ18, SJ19**) that cross the North Lucerne Valley and Cinnamon Hills bajada.

K. One (1) open, thoroughfare route extension (**east SJ7**).

The Proposed Action would not affect the public's ability to camp along public roads in the planning unit, per CDCA guidelines. The vehicle access route network proposed **includes all routes that access frequently used camping areas in the unit, but a few infrequently used camping areas would not be directly accessible by vehicle**, particularly in the vicinity of springs and livestock watering areas. Similarly, **vehicle travel on proposed limited use routes would be focused on providing only affected landowner and/or permitted use vehicle access.** Other lawful vehicle uses on these routes, at the discretion of the Authorized Officer, could be permitted. **Some of these limited use routes would be gated and fenced at their intersections with designated open routes, to enforce designated limitations**. Although many of these proposed limited use routes were closed in the emergency route network, gates proposed herein would enable the land manager to recognize the needs of permitted uses associated with these routes, while effectively precluding potential impacts related to general public use of these routes.

The Proposed Action would simplify a visitor's ability to find his/her way in the planning unit. **Effective on-the-ground signing, open route berm maintenance and concealment of designated closed routes would also be beneficial in directing travelers to where they want to go. Future agency outreach efforts, including strategically placed kiosks with area information and maps, as well as regular ranger visitation, would be provided by both alternatives.** Visitors would still be responsible for knowing the laws and regulations relevant to public lands, including those related to vehicle travel. However, this pilot route designation effort has resulted in greatly improved maps and associated GIS resource map layers. From these maps, it will be easier for BLM personnel to analyze specific recreation use requests and for visitors to locate themselves or plan trips.

Indirect positive impacts to recreation within this planning unit would include an increased BLM emphasis on implementation of numerous visitor enhancements, such as parking areas, turn-around areas on one-way routes and hazard identification/signage. These indirect impacts would also include **a facilitation of BLM's ability to monitor visitor use levels/impacts and adjust local area management appropriately**. However, **costs associated with these enhancements would be higher** than that associated with the No Action Alternative.

Touring experiences associated with visual resources would be enhanced with the reclamation of routes proposed as closed, though **fewer routes would be reclaimed than with the No Action Alternative**. The degree of route reclamation effort/cost would concurrently be lower, with this proposal, but costs associated with installation of gates on limited use routes would be higher, than that associated with the No Action Alternative.

Residual impacts to recreation within this planning unit would include a continued ability to use some existing routes on private land, unless the owner decides otherwise, and **an increased potential to secure a long-term, challenging vehicle network, incorporating critical private land linkages**. In general, both are considered positive and extensive, in relation to recreation issues in the planning unit.

Few impacts on recreation use would occur with this alternative that do not occur with the No Action Alternative. Fencing, gates, barriers and signing as necessary would be used to actually assist in enforcing route closures near specific desert spring riparian areas with both alternatives. These 0.25 to 0.5 mile closed route setback designations are already in force at desert springs per the emergency network, but appropriate physical barriers, parking areas and gates/fences have yet to be installed. **A few "existing routes" would be new open designations in relation to the existing Emergency Ord Mountain Vehicle Access Network**, and **several of these are considered "moderate or high vehicle challenge" routes**. However, both alternatives contain vehicle routes of varying difficulty, challenge and complexity that provide access to the entire unit.

No impacts from a regional transportation system perspective would occur as a result of the Proposed Action. However, private landowners would have an increased ability to recreate on their land in the manner of their choice, and would be better able to manage uses on their land. **General access for non-motorized recreation on public lands would not change from current use patterns**. **Both alternatives provide a visitor with a large number of interconnecting routes, from which one can select many different combinations of point to point, dead end and loop routes**. Opportunities to visit the interpretive, geographic and natural history features of the planning unit have been incorporated into both the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative.

Overall, the Proposed Action differs moderately from the No Action Alternative, in relation to recreation opportunity issues within this planning unit. **A few more "challenge", or technical driving routes, have been designated open in this alternative. However, both alternatives would provide for direct vehicle access to specific recreation destinations requested by recreation use groups ("Finger Rock" and "Sweetwater Canyon").** This differs from the current emergency route network, in that direct vehicle access to these sites was lacking. **Several private land route easements have also been identified that could serve as critical vehicle travel loop linkages.** Acquisition of these easements could serve to secure all recreational facets of this proposed vehicle access network, if easement acquisition is supported by the public and determined feasible by the BLM.

Sensitive Vegetation

The four UPAs known to occur within the Ord Mountain Planning Unit, i.e., the **Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Ring Assemblage**, the **Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone Assemblage**, **the East Ord Mountain Jojoba Assemblage** and the **Desert Spring Riparian Assemblage**, are considered sensitive plant communities.

Similarly, two BLM designated sensitive plants (**Mojave Monkeyflower and Curved-pod Mojave Milkvetch**), known and reported, respectively, to occur within this Planning Unit, are addressed herein as sensitive vegetation. No new surveys for sensitive vegetation were conducted along any routes associated with this designation effort. Analyses were based on the **CDCA Plan, BLM office records, BLM management plans** for adjacent public land areas, **RAREFIND Natural Diversity Database records, previous EAs** and **staff familiarity** with terrain and plant communities occurring in the planning unit.

A total of 152.9 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 14.1 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 380 miles of routes would be designated closed within the planning unit, as a result of the Proposed Action. This would result in a **28.5-mile increase in open route mileage**; a **10.6-mile increase in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile decrease in closed route mileage**, in relation to the No Action Alternative.

Sensitive plants and plant communities in this planning unit can be extremely fragile in nature and subtle in appearance. These characteristics lend themselves to inadvertent damage or destruction by vehicles, as well as activities associated with vehicle travel. **The two specifically named sensitive plant species are extremely small and grow in areas where vehicle travel is common (washes and rolling hill-slopes).** Although plants such as creosote, jojoba and yucca are large bushes, unusual assemblages or features are often difficult to discern. **When sensitive vegetation is localized and situated adjacent to routes, a high potential exists for supporting soil and/or plant damage.** The closer the plants/communities are to the route, the higher the potential for plant damage becomes. Area creosote bush clonal rings, jojoba bushes and riparian plants situated in this manner have been damaged by past vehicle travel. Particularly when these plants are located near the terminus of one way routes. **Routes crossing, or terminating at, areas of known high plant sensitivity, increase the possibility of inadvertent and intentional damage to sensitive vegetation (Appendix I).**

The only known direct impact to sensitive vegetation as a consequence of the Proposed Action would be the potential effects upon individual plants associated with installation of fences and/or barriers to exclude vehicle travel through, or parking on, the affected soil areas of identified UPAs. No BLM-designated sensitive plant species would be affected and UPA vegetation would largely be avoided in this proposed installation work, i.e., the entirety of impact would be considered minimal. **This impact is considered beneficial overall and extremely limited in occurrence.**

No new direct impacts of an adverse nature to sensitive vegetation are anticipated to occur as a result of the Proposed Action. Operational procedures pertaining to the possibility of encountering new sensitive vegetation sites and the protection of known sensitive vegetation properties, have been incorporated into the Proposed Action. These procedures include a requirement for regular field reviews and to prepare a separate environmental analysis, with appropriate Section 7 ESA consultation, if it were determined that sensitive or listed species would be affected by planned ground-disturbing activities.

Indirect adverse impacts to sensitive vegetation of this Planning Unit would include the potential for minor soil disturbance associated with vehicle travel, parking and camping in proximity to open routes, parking and turn-around areas. This indirect impact potential is considered higher with the Proposed Action than with the No Action Alternative, based on a higher number of "challenge" routes, i.e., those requiring technical driving skills. In general, **indirect adverse impacts to sensitive vegetation as a consequence of the Proposed Action are considered slightly higher than that anticipated for the No Action Alternative.** Route reclamation efforts proposed in both alternatives would facilitate habitat improvement for sensitive vegetation at several sites and limit further damage at others. However, fewer roads would be reclaimed with the Proposed Action and the degree of reclamation effort/cost would be less, in relation to the No Action Alternative.

No residual impacts to sensitive vegetation within this planning unit, potentially resulting from the Proposed Action, have been identified.

Overall, the Proposed Action differs only slightly from the No Action Alternative in relation to sensitive vegetation protection and management within this planning unit. **A few more "challenge" routes have been designated open** in the Proposed Action and fewer routes would be reclaimed in relation to No Action.

Use of these routes could potentially result in minor vehicle damage to supporting soils, and result in the loss of low numbers of individual plants located adjacent to routes. But for the most part, sensitive plants have already been removed from the interior portion of routes proposed open in both alternatives. The main difference between the two lies in the differing potentials for the indirect impacts of soil disturbance and individual plant damage/loss.

Sensitive Wildlife

Those animal species listed in **Table 1** are collectively referred to here as sensitive wildlife. No new surveys for sensitive wildlife were conducted along any routes associated with this designation effort. Analyses were based on wildlife and plant communities known to occur in the vicinity of particular routes. **CDCA Plan information, BLM office records, BLM management plans for adjacent public land areas, RAREFIND Natural Diversity Database records, previous EAs** and **staff familiarity** with the wildlife species of the planning unit were also relied upon. **A total of 152.9 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 14.1 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 380 miles of routes would be designated closed within the planning unit, as a result of the Proposed Action**. This would result in a **28.5-mile increase in open route mileage; a 10.6-mile increase in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile decrease in closed route mileage,** in relation to the No Action Alternative.

The most substantial direct impact to sensitive wildlife within this planning unit would include: **a moderately increased mileage of designated open and limited use routes in sensitive wildlife species' habitats, in relation to the current Ord Mountain Emergency Vehicle Access Route Network, or No Action Alternative**. These additional routes (refer to **Map C**, ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***) and sensitive habitats would include:

A. Four (4) open, loop routes (**SJ21, SJ28, SJ31, and SJ32**); two (2) open, dead-end routes (**SJ29, SJ30**); and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL12**). These routes are located within and adjacent to the **Southern Slope West Ord Mountain Breeding and Neotropical Migrant Bird Wash/Mojave Yucca Use Area** and the **Sidewinder Mountain Desert Bighorn Sheep Travel Corridor**, located on the western/southern slopes of West Ord Mountain.

B. One (1) open, loop route (**SJ6**); three (3) open, dead-end routes (**SJ12, SJ22, SJ29**); and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL6**) within the **West Ord Mountain-Stoddard Ridge (WOMSR) Desert Bighorn Sheep Travel Corridor** and the **WOMSR Raptor Breeding Area**.

C. One (1) open, loop route (**SJ15**) in the **Ord Mountain Wash and Mojave Yucca Stand Breeding and Neotropical Migrant Bird Use Area**.

D. Three (3) limited, dead-end routes (**SJL1-3**) located within the **Daggett and Lenwood Wash Breeding and Neotropical Migrant Bird Use Areas**.

E. One (1) open, dead-end route (**SJ34**), terminating in **Sweetwater Canyon (Ord Mountain Desert Bighorn Sheep Use Area, Raptor Breeding Area and Bat Roost Area)**; and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL5**) terminating in the adjacent **Aztec Spring portion of this area**.

F. One (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL8**) that is currently gated and provides only pedestrian access and authorized vehicle access to the top of Ord Mountain, within the **Ord Mountain Raptor Breeding and Desert Bighorn Sheep Use Area**.

G. One (1) open, dead-end route (**SJ11**) and one (1) limited, high vehicle-challenge, dead-end route (**SJL9**) that together could potentially be modified into a loop route; and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL10**), in the **Ord Mountain Raptor Breeding Area and Bighorn Sheep Travel Corridor**.

H. One (1) open, loop route (**SJ20-SJ26**); and one (1) open, dead-end route (**SJ26**) in the **East Ord Mountain Raptor Breeding Area**.

I. One (1) open, dead-end route (**SJ35**) located in the **Cinnamon Hills Breeding and Neotropical Migrant Bird Use Area**.

J. Three (2) open loop routes (**SJ17, SJ18, SJ19**) that cross the **North Lucerne Valley Wash Breeding and Neotropical Migrant Bird Use Area**.

The simple presence of a vehicle route in habitats supporting these sensitive species, does not necessarily equate to a specific direct impact, but the type, intensity and frequency of vehicle use on specific routes, can result in direct accidental and intentional impacts (Appendix I). Particularly when this same set of routes has been recognized as closed to public use for the last four years. Specific direct adverse impacts to wildlife species residing near routes proposed for open designation, may or may not occur over time, and are likely to vary in degree of impact dependent upon route use intensity and frequency, as well as sensitive species density.

Direct adverse impacts related to designation could include habitat degradation adjacent to routes designated open or limited; possible animal mortality; and short or long-term displacement of affected wildlife from specific portions of their territories.

A high degree of increased sensitive wildlife use is unlikely to have occurred on routes identified for additional public use, specifically since the Ord Mountain Emergency Vehicle Network was enacted. Although there has not been complete user compliance with the current route network, there has been insufficient time for natural habitat reclamation or animal recruitment into a majority of the area influenced by these route closures. However, **a degree of natural reclamation, and potentially some sensitive wildlife use, has occurred on many routes closed in 1995, and this reclamation/wildlife use could be set back by proposed open designation.**

Other direct impacts anticipated as a result of implementing the proposed action could include **minor, short term displacement of sensitive avian species residing near routes proposed for closure rehabilitation. Fencing, barrier installation and vehicle turn-around** work would result in similar impacts.

However, this **displacement would be minimized** by the incorporation into the proposed action, of an **onsite agency staff preview of closed routes to be rehabilitated, including where rehabilitation materials may be coming from. Such a preview allows site-specific evaluations to be made, including whether or not a seasonal restriction/onsite monitor is needed, or whether an additional level of environmental analysis is necessary.**

Neither desert bighorn sheep nor identified bat species would be directly impacted in an adverse manner by route network implementation. Should a situation of potential harm to desert bighorn sheep or bats arise, or a potential for adverse modification of these species' habitats is identified in site-specific evaluation of implementation actions, additional environmental analysis and/or conference with the CDFG may be required. Likewise, **should the final approved route network facilitate human visitation to specific bat roosts/ringtail or riparian habitat, additional environmental analysis would be required to install bat grating that allows wildlife entry but prohibits human entry, or riparian area fencing.**

In the case of bats and mines, inappropriate human visitation can cause roost-site abandonment by bats. In the case of riparian areas, inappropriate human visitation can cause avian nesting failure, loss of mammal watering/feeding sites and a decrease in overall functioning condition, particularly when roads are located proximally.

Existing routes accessing the immediate vicinity of wildlife water improvements, or "upland game-bird guzzlers", are closed under both alternatives. Such improvements assist in maintaining the prey base needed by sensitive wildlife such as raptors and are frequently under-utilized or vandalized if easily accessible by vehicle. **Pedestrian access would be necessitated for regular guzzler monitoring throughout the planning unit.** Such access has been provided by a short distance hike (0.1-0.25 mile) from an open route to all guzzlers in the planning unit with the exception of Willow Spring. Pedestrian access from a limited use route is provided in this instance. Additionally, should guzzler maintenance activities require vehicle access, a specific letter of authorization could be issued by the BLM Field Manager to allow vehicle use, subject to pertinent stipulations.

No other direct adverse impacts to sensitive wildlife are anticipated. **Direct beneficial impacts above the current situation, associated with route signage/maintenance, improved turn-around areas and rehabilitation of closed routes, could be substantial.** These would include **improved suitable habitat for the large majority of identified sensitive wildlife species** within the planning area, as well as a **reduction in route use degradation of wildlife habitat, animal mortality and displacement.**

Indirect adverse impacts of the Proposed Action would include the likelihood of minor vehicle travel-related habitat structure (soil, water, vegetation, boulders, mineshafts) disturbance in the immediate proximity of open routes, including that related to fire/weed influences, and human presence-related disturbance. These indirect adverse impacts would be anticipated to occur over time to various degrees on different routes, as a result of vehicle straying/turning, intentional proliferation, parking and camping. Monitoring of route conditions and implementation of corrective actions would minimize the adverse nature of these potential indirect impacts.

A high potential for weed establishment and fire occurrence is also considered a likely indirect adverse impact of vehicle use on any approved route network for the planning unit. These indirect impacts could affect small numbers of sensitive wildlife species whose territories encompass open routes, in relation to **forage nutrition, fire mortality rates** and/or the **appropriate spacing of escape cover. The two indirect impacts of weeds and fire considered collectively, also pose a high potential for large-scale vegetative type conversion**, affecting larger numbers of identified sensitive wildlife species in particular areas. Route reclamation efforts proposed in both alternatives would likely facilitate a reduction of non-native, invasive vegetation at several sites and limit further weed spread at others. However, fewer roads would be reclaimed with the Proposed Action and the degree of reclamation effort/cost would be less, in relation to the No Action Alternative.

In general, **indirect adverse impacts to sensitive wildlife occurring within the planning unit as a consequence of route designation specified in the proposed action, are considered low and limited in occurrence, but moderately higher in scope than that anticipated for the No Action Alternative.**

The number of routes designated open in the Proposed Action, relative to that designated in the No Action Alternative, would have a greater negative effect upon some of the planning unit's biotic resources. However, this negative effect upon biotic resources is anticipated to be minor to moderate, over time, in relation to the specific set of routes proposed for open status and identified sensitive species. Furthermore, if the local community is supportive of the proposed vehicle access network, this minor to moderate negative impact upon biotic resources may be offset by the positive impact of strong local support for visitor compliance with the finalized route network.

Overall fragmentation of sensitive wildlife habitat related to the Proposed Action is thought to be moderately higher than that related to the No Action Alternative. This is considered particularly so for raptors and desert bighorn sheep, who have limited nesting, lambing and watering habitat available in proximity to appropriate prey/ forage base; and in general, much less so for various neotropical songbirds and crevice-roosting bats, whose habitats are more widespread and available for use.

Should supplemental implementation actions (non-crevice bat roost grating, riparian area fencing, end-of-road identification, vehicle turn-around improvements and installation of barriers) occur following adoption of a final vehicle access network for this Planning Unit, **limited residual impacts to sensitive wildlife species** would occur as a result of the Proposed Action. **If these supplemental implementation actions were not to occur, residual impacts such as increased animal mortality or displacement and habitat degradation over and above that currently occurring, are likely to occur to some degree at specific wildlife habitat locations (Appendix I).**

Overall, **the Proposed Action differs moderately from No Action in relation to sensitive wildlife protection and management** within this planning unit. **A few more "challenge" routes** have been designated open that could potentially result in **minor vehicle damage to supporting soils/habitat structure; as well as some degree of sensitive wildlife habitat degradation, animal displacement and/or mortality**. The potential for **indirect impacts (fire, weeds, vegetative type conversion) and residual impacts (direct impacts related to lack of implementation), as well as wildlife population fragmentation, is considered moderately higher** with the Proposed Action when compared to the No Action Alternative.

<u>Soils/Erosion</u>

A high degree of OHV impact to undisturbed soils can occur within relatively short periods of OHV use. **After lengthy periods of OHV use, new impacts on soils (additional compaction, higher reductions in porosity, further increased bulk density, or accelerated water & aeolian erosion rates) are relatively small**. However, these new impacts can be magnified by specific vehicle types, duration of vehicle use and other factors, such as livestock grazing (cattle often trail adjacent to vehicle routes) and weather. The routes previously designated, as well as those proposed for designation, have been in existence for 5 to 50 or more years. **Further direct soil impacts within these open (152.9 miles) and limited use (14.1 miles) routes is considered unlikely, though accelerated erosion could occur on many in the future, dependent on type, intensity and frequency of vehicle use, affected terrain and soil strata, as well as the season of vehicle use**.

For routes proposed for closure (380 miles), direct, positive soil impacts are expected over time. Use of pitting, scarification and vertical mulching reclamation techniques is anticipated to accelerate soil growth and minimize potential erosion problems where it is applied. In cases where natural rehabilitation is occurring on currently designated closed routes, this growth process would continue and the soils under the route would continue to improve, with erosion potentials continuing to decline, over time. **Where natural rehabilitation is occurring on currently designated closed routes, soil improvement could be halted or reversed, and erosion potentials gradually increased**, if vehicle use resumes.

The Proposed Action would result in slightly less soil improvement on a few routes, and slightly higher erosion potentials over time on a few routes, when compared to the No Action Alternative. Other direct aspects of soil improvement and re-vegetation occurring on a few currently closed routes, would similarly be slowed, halted or reversed if designated open or limited.

Adverse indirect impacts of the Proposed Action related to soils/erosion potentials of this planning unit would include the likelihood of minor vehicle travel-related soil disturbance in the immediate proximity of designated open routes, as a result of vehicle straying/turning, parking and camping. Monitoring of route conditions throughout the entire route network as prescribed in the CDCA Plan and implementation of corrective actions would minimize the severity of these adverse indirect impacts.

Route reclamation efforts proposed would facilitate soil development and/or improvement at several sites and limit further soil/erosion damage at others. Reclamation efforts proposed in both alternatives would facilitate soil improvement, but fewer roads would be reclaimed with the Proposed Action and the degree of reclamation effort/ cost would be less, in relation to the No Action Alternative. In general, indirect beneficial impacts of both the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative, in relation to soils and erosion potentials within the planning unit, are considered highly positive and limited in occurrence.

A residual impact of accelerated erosion, particularly gully, rill and "washboard-related" erosion, is likely to occur along specific designated open routes in the central (West Ord and Ord Mountains) and southeast (Cinnamon Hills) portions of the planning unit over time. Soils in portions of these areas are highly susceptible to erosion and adverse residual impacts are considerably magnified in areas of high vehicle use and where slope extremes are encountered. However, **vehicle use-related impacts in these erosion-susceptible areas have been minimized to the degree feasible in the Proposed Action, through the incorporation of several measures.** These include **minimization of slope extremes during route maintenance activities; facilitation of vehicle turn-around areas on dead-end roads; implementation of line-of-sight and "end-of-road" route signage; "vertical mulching", or reclamation of designated closed routes to the visual horizon**; and **barrier installation at specific locations.**

Overall, **the Proposed Action differs moderately from the No Action Alternative in relation to soils and erosion potentials.** A higher potential for accelerated erosion exists with the Proposed Action, due both to a higher number of open and limited use routes, as well as the higher vehicle challenge nature of some of these routes.

<u>Threatened & Endangered Wildlife</u>

The desert tortoise is the only threatened & endangered (T&E) species known to occur within the planning unit. No new tortoise surveys were conducted for this designation effort. Analyses were based on desert tortoise sightings, wildlife and plant communities known to occur in the vicinity of particular routes. **CDCA Plan information, BLM office records, BLM management plans for adjacent public land areas, RAREFIND Natural Diversity Database records, previous EAs,** the ***Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan*** and **staff familiarity** with wildlife species and habitats of the planning unit were also relied upon.

A total of 152.9 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 14.1 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 380 miles of routes would be designated closed within the planning unit, as a result of the Proposed Action. This would result in a **28.5-mile increase in open route mileage; a 10.6-mile increase in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile decrease in closed route mileage,** in relation to the No Action Alternative (refer to **Map C,** ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***).

The most substantial direct impact to tortoises as a result of the Proposed Action would include **a moderately increased mileage of designated open routes in tortoise critical habitat, in relation to the current Ord Mountain Emergency Vehicle Route Network (No Action Alternative).** These additional routes within designated critical habitat for the desert tortoise would include:

A. Two (2) open, loop routes (**SJ21, SJ28**); one (1) open, dead-end route (**SJ30**); and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL12**) within the **West Ord Mountain Moderate DTEZ**.

B. Two (2) open, loop routes (**SJ31, SJ32**) within the **West Ord Mountain Low DTEZ**.

C. Three (3) limited, dead-end routes (**SJL1-3**) located in the **East Stoddard Valley High DTEZ**.

D. One (1) open, dead-end route (**SJ11**) and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL9**) that together could potentially be modified into a loop route; and one (1) limited, dead-end route (**SJL10**), in the **Tyler Valley Low DTEZ**.

E. One (1) open, loop route (**SJ20-SJ26**); one (1) open, dead-end route (**SJ26**); and one (1) limited use, dead-end route (**SJL13**) located in the **East Ord Mountain Low DTEZ**.

F. One (1) open, dead-end route (**SJ35**) and three (3) open, loop routes (**SJ17, SJ18, SJ19**) located in the **North Lucerne Valley High DTEZ**.

The simple presence of a vehicle route in desert tortoise habitat does not necessarily equate to a specific direct impact, aside from the lack of cover, burrowing substrate and forage present within the confines of that specific route. But the type, intensity and frequency of vehicle use on specific routes can facilitate direct accidental and intentional impacts to tortoises (Appendix I). This is particularly so for affected suitable tortoise habitat when a set of routes has been recognized as closed to public use for the last four years. However, specific direct adverse impacts to tortoises residing near open routes may or may not occur over time.

Direct impacts to desert tortoises of an adverse nature are not anticipated as a result of implementation work detailed in the Proposed Action. No suitable habitat for this species is anticipated to be disturbed, with the exception of minor hand-removal of dead desert shrubs from portions of desert tortoise habitat under the direction of agency biologists, when the removal would be carefully spaced and not affect any animal burrow. **Should a situation of potential tortoise "take" arise, or a potential for adverse tortoise habitat modification be identified, in the site-specific evaluation of implementation actions associated with the proposed action, additional environmental analysis and/or FWS consultation and CDFG conference would be required.**

Direct beneficial impacts over and above the current situation, associated with route signage/maintenance, improved vehicle turn-a-rounds and rehabilitation of closed routes, could be substantial. This would include improved suitable habitat for tortoises within the planning area over time, as well as a reduction in current route use degradation of tortoise habitat, animal mortality and displacement.

Indirect impacts would include a continued possibility of minor vehicle travel-related habitat structure disturbance and alteration (including fire and weed influences) or removal; as well as a continued potential for human presence-related disturbance, in the immediate proximity of designated open routes.
These indirect impacts would be anticipated to occur over time to various degrees on different routes, as a result of vehicle straying/turning, parking and camping. Monitoring of route conditions throughout the entire approved route network and implementation of corrective actions would minimize the adverse nature of these potential indirect impacts to the tortoise.

A high potential for minor habitat structure alteration, weed establishment and fire occurrence is considered a likely indirect impact of vehicle use on any approved route network for the planning unit. Should fire occur, **these indirect impacts could affect small numbers of tortoises whose territories encompass open routes, in relation to forage nutrition, fire mortality and/or the appropriate spacing of escape cover.**

Roads, routes and potential fire/weed impacts considered collectively also pose a high potential for large-scale vegetative type conversion, indirectly affecting larger numbers of desert tortoise in particular areas. Grasslands, which often replace native shrub-lands in type-conversion instances, offer little in the way of suitable habitat for tortoises. In general, potential **indirect adverse impacts to sensitive wildlife occurring within the planning unit as a consequence of route designation specified in the proposed action, are considered negative and limited in occurrence, but moderately higher in scope than that anticipated for the No Action Alternative**.

Fragmentation of desert tortoise habitat related to the Proposed Action is thought to be moderately higher than that related to the No Action Alternative. However, information pertinent to tortoise habitat and population fragmentation related to vehicles/route use is extremely limited. Fragmentation may cause a narrowing of habitats, which can be significant for wide-ranging species or animals that have limited access to resources. But it is clear from the literature (**Appendix IV**) that habitats lacking designated route networks over time, generally become more sensitive to any kind of disturbance, with even slight changes potentially leading to habitat deterioration.

Should supplemental implementation actions such as fencing, end-of-road identification, vehicle turn-around improvements and installation of barriers occur following adoption of a final vehicle access network for the planning unit, **limited residual impacts to desert tortoises** are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed action. **If these supplemental implementation actions were not to occur, residual impacts such as increased tortoise mortality or displacement and tortoise habitat degradation over and above that currently occurring, are likely to occur to some degree at specific tortoise habitat locations (Appendix I)**.

Overall, **the Proposed Action differs moderately from No Action in relation to desert tortoise protection and management** within this planning unit. **A few more "challenge" routes** have been designated open in this alternative, that could potentially result in **minor vehicle damage to supporting soils/habitat structure in a few tortoise use areas**; as well as some degree of tortoise habitat degradation, animal displacement and/or mortality.

The potential for indirect impacts (fire, weeds, vegetative type conversion) and residual impacts (direct impacts related to lack of implementation), as well as **tortoise population fragmentation,** is considered **moderately higher with the Proposed Action Alternative when compared to the No Action Alternative**. Route reclamation efforts proposed in both alternatives would facilitate habitat improvement for the desert tortoise at several sites and limit further habitat damage at others. However, fewer roads would be reclaimed with the Proposed Action and the degree of reclamation effort/cost would be less, in relation to the No Action Alternative.

No adverse modification of desert tortoise critical habitat is anticipated to occur, and **the potential for project-related incidental take of a threatened species is considered minimal.** However, **the Proposed Action implements several Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan actions and would "positively affect" the species, thus formal consultation per the Federal Endangered Species Act is required. Formal Conference with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) is similarly required** by the State Endangered Species Act. It is recommended that such consultation take the form of a BLM request to the FWS and CDFG for a **"Positive Affect Concurrence"** response letter (**Appendix IX**), following selection of an agency-preferred alternative.

Scenic Resources

A total of 152.9 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 14.1 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 380 miles of routes would be designated closed within the planning unit, as a result of the Proposed Action. This would result in a **28.5-mile increase in open route mileage**; a **10.6-mile increase in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile decrease in closed route mileage**, in relation to the No Action Alternative (refer to **Map C**, ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***).

Signing of open and limited routes would affect scenic resources directly, through the addition of artificial, vertical obstructions such as signs, gates and fencing in a primarily open landscape. This specific **scenic resource impact would be slightly higher with the Proposed Action, when compared to No Action**, based on the larger number of designated open and limited use routes. **Rehabilitating portions of closed routes would also affect scenic resources directly, by reinstating natural appearances. This benefit is anticipated to be higher with the No Action Alternative.** Maintenance of open and limited routes would affect scenic resources directly too, by preventing vehicle use on some routes and encouraging/discouraging such use on others. Again, this scenic resource impact would be slightly higher with the Proposed Action, when compared to the No Action Alternative. Monitoring route designation implementation would not affect scenic resources directly, but implementing corrective actions per monitoring results could affect these resources directly.

Such **corrective actions could result in promoting compliance with the designated route network, resulting in a rehabilitation of natural appearances.** On the other hand, these corrective actions could result in further scenic resource degradation, if a particular route closure is not well accepted by the public, and/or if regular monitoring or enforced compliance intervals are lacking. **The greater number and "challenge" character of routes proposed open and limited in the Proposed Action, when compared to the No Action Alternative, could foster greater acceptance by specific user groups.**

Designation of all existing routes would affect scenic resources indirectly, by encouraging use of a specific network of open routes by the general public. Vehicle use on designated closed routes, some of which contribute to visual resource degradation in specific areas, would also be discouraged with an effective designation effort. **In terms of residual impacts, open and limited routes would affect scenic resources in the affected area to a low degree, but this situation is no different than that occurring now.** Improper maintenance of routes could result in route widening or proliferation, and increase visual resource degradation in specific areas. Ineffective rehabilitation of designated closed routes could promote route persistence or result in a greater impact upon visual resources than that which is occurring now. Ineffective monitoring, or ineffective corrective actions, could produce varying effects. The extent of scenic resource residual impacts are thought to be slightly higher with the Proposed Action, when compared to the No Action Alternative, based on the larger number of designated open routes and fewer number of routes reclaimed.

Overall, the **Proposed Action differs moderately from the No Action Alternative in relation to scenic resources.** This is due primarily to the Proposed Action's higher sign and fence-related visual impacts, as well as a higher level of residual impacts. However, the level of reclamation effort/cost is anticipated to be less with the Proposed Action, in comparison to the No Action Alternative.

<u>Wetland/Riparian Zones</u>

The few desert springs sprinkled throughout this planning unit have all been influenced over the years by vehicle use, camping, parking and intentional route proliferation in their proximity. **The current Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network (No Action Alternative) approved very few direct vehicle access routes to desert springs occurring on public land.** Rather, **this previous designation effort emphasized closure of the terminal end of such routes, at a distance of 0.25-0.5 mile from the actual spring riparian zone**, and creation of a suitable turnaround/parking area at the newly designated terminus of such routes. However, **effective termination of vehicle use on these currently closed routes has yet to be achieved at several spring sites, due primarily to uncompleted site improvements (site reclamation, parking area/barrier installation).**

Analyses were based on the CDCA Plan, BLM records, and recreation area plans for adjacent public lands, previous EAs and **staff familiarity** with Planning Area terrain and plant communities. **A total of 152.9 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 14.1 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 380 miles of routes would be designated closed within the planning unit, as a result of the Proposed Action.** This would result in a **28.5-mile increase in open route mileage; a 10.6-mile increase in limited use route mileage;** and a **39.1-mile decrease in closed route mileage,** in relation to the No Action Alternative (refer to **Map C,** ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***).

Open routes of travel currently provide vehicle access to the vicinity of **Aztec Spring (OM21), Coyote Hole Spring (OM20), Goat Spring (OM27), Quill Spring (OM24), Upper and Lower Sweetwater Springs (OM21).** However, 0.25-0.5 mile of hiking is required to directly access all but one these springs, per the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network, and that is **Coyote Hole Spring.**

The Proposed Action would re-designate route OM20 to Coyote Hole Spring closed and would re-designate a road into Sweetwater Canyon (SJ34) as open, with a terminal parking area, to minimize biotic impacts. The Proposed Action would also protect authorized vehicle route uses at Aztec and Goat Springs, while minimizing general public vehicle access impacts at these springs, by **designating two direct access roads as limited use routes (SJL5 and SJL6).** A combination of **gates, barriers, reclamation, and parking area improvements are proposed in both alternatives, in order to provide direct vehicle access for authorized uses, and pedestrian access for general public use.**

A proposed open route accesses the quarter mile vicinity of all remaining public land springs occurring in the planning unit, with the exception of **Willow Spring,** where a proposed limited use route accesses the 0.1 mile vicinity of the spring. A short distance hike would be required to directly access these springs. For general public use, routes SJL5, SJ1 or SJ34 and SJL8 would provide the shortest distance pedestrian access to Aztec Spring, Coyote Hole Spring and Willow Spring, respectively.

With reference to Sweetwater Canyon, **vehicle access would be extended with the Proposed Action, to a disturbed area located within 0.25 mile of both Sweetwater Springs.** This dead-end area would be situated in a manner conducive to adequate parking and turning-around on public lands, replete with barriers to restrict continued vehicle travel into the riparian and bighorn sheep use zones of Sweetwater Canyon. A proposed open, dead-end route would also access the vicinity of **Joker Spring** (Saddle Tank) on private lands, but a gated barrier would restrict continued general public vehicle travel into the active livestock watering site located there.

Wetland and riparian zones are extremely fragile in relation to roads/vehicle travel. These sites are sought-after areas of rest for man and animal alike, and **their characteristics lend themselves to repeated inadvertent damage by vehicles, as well as wildlife disturbance associated with human presence and vehicle travel.**

The only known direct impact to wetland and/or riparian zones of this planning unit as a consequence of the Proposed Action would be beneficial. It would consist of the **protective impact resulting from route reclamation, and/or from the installation of fences and/or barriers,** to exclude vehicle travel near the hydric soil areas of several desert springs (**Coyote Hole, Goat, Quill, Upper Sweetwater, Lower Sweetwater** and **Willow**). The emergency route network currently in place already limits direct vehicular access on paper to most desert spring riparian areas in the planning unit and both alternatives would address riparian zone vehicle access similarly. **This direct impact is considered positive and extremely limited in occurrence.**

Indirect adverse impacts to wetland and riparian zones of this planning unit would include a low potential for minor vehicle travel, parking, camping and intentional route proliferation-related soil disturbance in proximity to the parking and turn-around areas developed for pedestrian access to springs. A similar **potential for weed establishment and fire occurrence** exists at such parking areas, that could also negatively impact native vegetation adjacent to open routes originating from these parking and turn-around areas. **A very low potential for large-scale vegetative type conversion affecting riparian vegetation exists with both the Proposed Action or the No Action alternative, as routes would cease to terminate at these critical sites.**

No residual impacts to wetlands or riparian zones within this planning unit, potentially resulting from the Proposed Action, have been identified.

Overall, the Proposed Action differs marginally from No Action in relation to wetland and riparian zone protection and management. The difference between the two is really a **recognition of established use patterns and the accelerating vehicle use impacts at one spring site. The Proposed Action would close one route (OM20) at a distance 0.25 mile from Coyote Hole Spring, whereas the No Action Alternative would retain the current route distance (0.1-mile access to Coyote Hole Spring).**

X. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF NO ACTION

Cultural Resources

Similar to the Proposed Action, the No Action Alternative would add **2 open route miles** (SJ34/SJ35) to the existing emergency route network in order to provide vehicle access to "Sweetwater Canyon" and "Finger Rock" vicinities. It would also recognize **3.5 limited use route miles** (SJL4/SJL8), which provide vehicle access to a communications site on Ord Mountain and a wildlife water catchment area in East Stoddard Valley. In **total, 124.4 miles of routes would be designated open; 3.5 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 419.1 miles of routes would be designated closed within the planning unit, as a result of the No Action Alternative.** This represents **a 28.5-mile reduction in open route mileage; a 10.6-mile reduction in limited use route mileage;** and **a 39.1-mile increase in closed route mileage,** in relation to the Proposed Action (refer to **Map C**, ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***). **This alternative would retain and finalize the Emergency Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network currently in place** for the planning unit.

Cultural resources can be extremely fragile in nature and subtle in appearance. These characteristics lend themselves to inadvertent damage by vehicles, as well as activities associated with vehicle travel. Artifacts and rock alignments are sometimes difficult to see from a vehicle and have been damaged in other areas by vehicular usage. **Routes crossing or terminating at areas of known sensitivity increase the possibility of inadvertent and intentional damage to cultural resources.** Previous impacts to sites within the project area have been documented. A few existing routes traverse archaeological sites or are located immediately adjacent to known sites. Several existing routes terminate at identified historic period mining sites. Most of these were considered in the previous emergency route designation effort and are addressed in both the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative.

No additional, specific direct, indirect or residual impacts to cultural resources have been identified within the project area as a result of the No Action Alternative. All **identified cultural resources would be avoided by project design** during any route rehabilitation and/or barrier construction **or would be analyzed and appropriately mitigated under supplemental environmental analysis**.

No new adverse impacts to cultural resources are anticipated to occur as a result of the No Action Alternative. **Operational procedures pertaining to the possibility of encountering new cultural properties and the protection of known cultural properties have been incorporated** into this alternative. These procedures include a requirement for regular field reviews and preparation of a separate environmental analysis, with appropriate Section 106 SHPO consultation if determined necessary, prior to commencement of ground-disturbing activities.

Overall, the Proposed Action does not differ from the No Action Alternative in relation to cultural resource protection and management within this planning unit. The newly proposed open route into Sweetwater Canyon would provide vehicle access to an area of high cultural resource value, though vehicle use on this proposed open route has been ongoing for years. In addition, much of the area's cultural resources are located on private lands.

Invasive, Non-native Species

This alternative represents **a 28.5-mile reduction in open route mileage; a 10.6-mile reduction in limited use route mileage**; and **a 39.1-mile increase in closed route mileage**, in relation to the Proposed Action (refer to **Map C**, ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***). It **would also retain and finalize the Emergency Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network** currently in place for the planning unit, **and would add 2 miles of open routes (SJ35/SJ34) which would facilitate vehicle access to the "Finger Rock" and "Sweetwater Canyon" vicinities**. It would also recognize **3.5 limited use route miles (SJL4/SJL8)**, which provide vehicle access to a communications site on Ord Mountain and a wildlife water catchment area in East Stoddard Valley.

The only known direct impact to invasive, non-native species as a consequence of the No Action Alternative would be the **potential facilitation of exotic plant establishment/spread over time, along the road shoulders of designated open (124.4 miles) and limited use (3.5 miles) routes.** This would apply particularly so in the vicinity of parking and turn-around areas. This impact is considered negative overall and widespread in occurrence. However, this potential impact over time would be less severe than that associated with the Proposed Action, due to a smaller number of open/limited use vehicle routes.

Indirect impacts to invasive, non-native species would include **a facilitated potential for vegetative type-conversion of plant communities located adjacent to where these plants occur, in conjunction with recurrent fire.** If fire were to occur, such an influence could result in a range of impact severity, affecting little to large numbers of vegetation adjacent to open routes. In general, non-native species spread out the expense of the natives following recurrent fire, with shrub-lands often replaced with grasslands or "type-converted" in particular areas over time. When dry, such grasslands pose a high-risk potential for fire ignition from both natural fire sources (lightning-ignited) and induced fire sources (spark-ignited from vehicles lacking spark arresters, escaped campfires or shooting), and generally increase an area's fire regime frequency. **This indirect impact potential is considered lower with the No Action Alternative than with the Proposed Action, based on a smaller number of open vehicle routes**.

No residual impacts to invasive, non-native species within this planning unit, potentially resulting from the No Action Alternative, have been identified.

A greater number of roads would be reclaimed and the **degree of route reclamation effort/cost would be higher than that detailed in the Proposed Action**. However, surface disturbance, effort and cost associated with gate installation would also be lower, in comparison to the Proposed Action. **Overall, the No Action Alternative differs moderately from the Proposed Action in relation to invasive, non-native species.** It would result in a lower number of open/limited use routes, a higher number of closed routes and an anticipated lower rate of soil disturbance associated with gates, parking and turn-around areas.

Public Health and Safety

A total of 124.4 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 3.5 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and a total of 419.1 miles of routes would be designated as closed, within the planning unit, as a result of the No Action Alternative. **This alternative would retain and finalize the Emergency Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network** currently in place for the planning unit, **and would add 2 miles of open routes which would facilitate vehicle access to the "Finger Rock" and "Sweetwater Canyon" vicinities.** It would also recognize **3.5 limited use route miles** (SJL4/SJL8), which provide vehicle access to a communications site on Ord Mountain and a wildlife water catchment area in East Stoddard Valley.

Direct impacts to public health and safety would be little different than that anticipated for the Proposed Action. These would include a **facilitation of the public's ability to know where they are in a specific portion of the planning unit**, as well as the **capability to more effectively communicate where they or hazards are to emergency personnel and BLM rangers. An identification of where a route ends or where a hazard may be encountered**, as well as an **improved ability of visitors to turn around at the terminus of a one way route** are also considered **direct positive impacts** of this alternative. **A limitation of the number of potentially hazardous routes easily mistaken as open**, through effective reclamation & concealment of closed routes, is also considered a **direct, beneficial impact.** All of these preceding beneficial impacts are anticipated with either the No Action Alternative or the Proposed Action.

Indirect impacts to public health and safety would include a facilitation of BLM's ability to monitor and remediate public land health and safety issues. Designated closed vehicle routes, some of which contain hazards, would be officially "put to bed" and would not need to be periodically patrolled. **Search and rescue response times would also be reduced by improved open route signage.** Closed route concealment would also assist in this endeavor.

Gate costs associated with limited use routes accessing private lands would be slightly lower with this alternative when compared with the Proposed Action, but route reclamation efforts proposed in both alternatives would facilitate the reduction of some public hazards. **More routes would be reclaimed with this alternative, but the degree of route reclamation effort/cost would similarly be higher**, in relation to the Proposed Action.

No residual impacts to public health and safety, potentially resulting from the No Action Alternative, have been identified. No new hazards to public health and safety are anticipated to occur as a result of No Action. Operational procedures pertaining to public health and safety features have been incorporated into the Proposed Action. These procedures include following prescribed work guidelines, a requirement for signage in areas containing hazards and regular route network monitoring to identify hazards before accidents occur.

Overall, the No Action Alternative differs only slightly from the Proposed Action, in relation to public health and safety issues within this planning unit. **A few less "challenge" routes** have been designated open, and a few more routes designated closed in this alternative, that could potentially result in vehicle damage or drivers becoming stranded or injured.

Recreation

Representing **open route (28.5-mile) and limited use route (10.6-mile) reductions** in comparison to the Proposed Action (refer to **Map C**, ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***), this alternative **would retain and finalize the Emergency Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network. It would add 2 miles of open routes, which would facilitate vehicle access (SJ35/SJ34) to the "Finger Rock" and "Sweetwater Canyon."**

It would also recognize **3.5 limited use route miles** (SJL4/SJL8), which provide permitted vehicle access to a communications site on Ord Mountain and a wildlife water catchment area in East Stoddard Valley. Pedestrian use of both of these limited use routes would remain unaffected, allowing for continued hunting and hiking access.

Specifically, **direct recreation impacts related to the No Action Alternative would include maintenance of a similar vehicle route mileage as that now emergency-designated.** In total, 124.4 miles of routes would be designated open; 3.5 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and a total of 419.1 miles of routes would be designated as closed, within the planning unit, as a result of the No Action Alternative.

Similar to the Proposed Action, **this alternative would facilitate the public's ability to know where they are** in a specific portion of the planning unit. Both alternatives **would also identify where a route ends or where a hazard may be encountered.** An **improved ability of visitors to turn around at the terminus of a one way route and a limitation of the number of potentially hazardous, closed routes easily mistaken as open,** are also considered direct, beneficial impacts of both alternatives**. Costs associated with these enhancements are considered lower with this alternative** in comparison to the Proposed Action. Concealment of designated closed routes in both alternatives would also assist in this endeavor.

This **vehicle access network alternative would amend the existing emergency network to provide direct vehicle access to a few regional features such as "Finger Rock" and "Sweetwater Canyon"**, both popular recreation destinations. Similar to the Proposed Action, it also provides several varying vehicle-challenge, loop and dead-end vehicle access routes; as well as provides connecting routes between two existing OHV areas; while minimizing resource concerns identified in the Emergency Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network identification process.

However, **fewer high vehicle-challenge and limited use routes** would be designated in this alternative. **Touring experiences associated with visual resources would be enhanced** with the reclamation of routes proposed as closed, with more **routes reclaimed in this alternative compared to the Proposed Action.** The degree of route reclamation effort/cost would concurrently be higher, with this proposal, but costs associated with installation of gates on limited use routes would be lower, than that associated with the Proposed Action.

Neither would affect the public's ability to camp along open routes in the planning unit and the existing vehicle access route network **includes the majority of all routes that access well-used camping areas.** Similar to the Proposed Action, **a few infrequently used camping areas would not be directly accessible by vehicle,** particularly in the vicinity of springs, wildlife water catchments and livestock watering areas.

Facilitation of agency outreach efforts (information kiosks, maps, and agency visitation) would not differ between alternatives. Visitors would still be responsible for knowing public land laws and regulations, including those related to vehicle travel. However, this pilot designation effort has resulted in improved planning unit maps. From these, specific recreation use request analyses and visitor trip planning can be facilitated.

Also similar to the Proposed Action, the No Action Alternative's **indirect impacts to recreation would include an increased BLM emphasis on implementation of numerous visitor enhancements, such as parking and turn-around areas on one-way routes and hazard identification/signage.** These indirect impacts would also include a **facilitation of BLM's ability to monitor visitor use levels/impacts and adjust local area management** appropriately. In relation to the West Mojave Desert, the role recreation groups have played in project development is likely to influence route designation procedures and outcomes in the forthcoming West Mojave Coordinated Management Plan. **Impacts from a regional transportation perspective would be that adequate vehicle access exists and would continue to exist.**

Residual impacts to recreation resulting from this alternative include a continued ability to use some existing routes on private land, unless the landowner decides otherwise. However, unlike the Proposed Action, no attempts would be made with this alternative to acquire private land road easements designed to ensure a long-term vehicle route network, involving road segments on private lands.

Few recreation use impacts would occur with this alternative that do not occur with the Proposed Action. Both alternatives contain interconnecting vehicle routes of varying difficulty, challenge and complexity that provide some degree of vehicle access to specific area features, as well as to the far corners of the entire planning unit. **Many different combinations of point to point and loop routes can be selected with either network. General access for non-motorized recreation on public lands would not change appreciably from current use patterns.** Opportunities to visit the interpretive, geographic and natural history features of the planning unit have been incorporated into both the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative. Thus, both satisfy MUC "L" route criteria.

Overall, the No Action Alternative differs moderately from the Proposed Action, in relation to recreation opportunity issues. A few less "challenge" and recreation destination routes have been designated open in this alternative. Acquisition of several private land route easements has also been identified in the Proposed Action, but not in this alternative. If acquired, these easements would completely finalize the route network if such an action proves to be supported by the public and is determined feasible by the BLM.

Sensitive Vegetation

A total of 124.4 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 3.5 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 419.1 miles of routes would be designated closed within the planning unit, as a result of the No Action Alternative. This represents a **28.5-mile reduction in open route mileage; a 10.6-mile reduction in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile increase in closed route mileage,** in relation to the Proposed Action (refer to **Map C**, ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***). **This alternative would retain and finalize the Emergency Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network currently in place** for the planning unit. However, this alternative would also add to this network **2 open route miles** (SJ34/SJ35) to provide vehicle access to "Sweetwater Canyon" and "Finger Rock". This emergency network would also be amended to recognize **3.5 limited use route miles** (SJL4/SJL8), which provide vehicle access to a communications site on Ord Mountain and a wildlife water catchment area in East Stoddard Valley.

The only known direct impact to sensitive vegetation as a consequence of the No Action Alternative would be the installation of fences and/or barriers to exclude vehicle travel through the affected soil areas of identified UPAs. No sensitive plant species would be affected and UPA vegetation would largely be avoided in this proposed installation work, i.e., the entirety of impact would be considered minimal. **This impact is considered beneficial overall and extremely limited in occurrence.**

No new direct impacts of an adverse nature to sensitive vegetation are anticipated to occur as a result of No Action. Operational procedures pertaining to the possibility of encountering new sensitive vegetation sites and the protection of known sensitive vegetation properties, have been incorporated into this alternative

Indirect adverse impacts to sensitive vegetation would include the potential for minor vehicle travel, parking, camping and intentional route proliferation-related soil disturbance in proximity to currently designated open routes. A similar indirect impact would include the **potential for weed establishment and fire occurrence** that could impact small numbers of sensitive vegetation adjacent to designated open routes. **The potential for an additional indirect impact, that of large-scale vegetative type conversion affecting identified sensitive vegetation, is considered slightly less with this alternative.**

In general, **indirect adverse impacts to sensitive vegetation as a consequence of this alternative are considered slightly lower than that anticipated for the Proposed Action**. However, route reclamation efforts proposed in both alternatives would facilitate habitat improvement for sensitive vegetation at some sites and limit further damage at others.

No residual impacts to sensitive vegetation within this planning unit, potentially resulting from the No Action Alternative, have been identified.

Overall, the No Action Alternative differs only slightly from the Proposed Action Alternative, in relation to sensitive vegetation protection and management within this planning unit. **A few less "challenge" routes** have been designated open in this alternative, resulting in **less potential for minor vehicle damage to supporting soils, and the loss of low numbers of individual plants, over time. A slightly lower potential for weed establishment, fire and vegetative type conversion is also anticipated with this alternative.** But for the most part, sensitive plants have already been removed from the interior portion of routes proposed open in both alternatives. The main difference between the two is the differing potentials for the collective indirect impact of fire, weeds and vegetative type conversion in specific areas, with lower potentials associated with this alternative.

<u>Sensitive Wildlife</u>

As specified previously, this alternative represents **28.5-mile reduction in open route mileage; a 10.6-mile reduction in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile increase in closed route mileage,** in relation to the Proposed Action (refer to **Map C**, ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***). It **would also retain and finalize the Emergency Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network** currently in place for the planning unit, **but would add 2 miles of open routes facilitating vehicle access to the "Finger Rock" and "Sweetwater Canyon".**

The mileage of open routes in sensitive species' habitats would be considerably less with this alternative, when compared to the Proposed Action. However, the simple presence of a vehicle route in habitats supporting sensitive species does not necessarily equate to a specific direct impact. But the type, intensity and frequency of vehicle use on specific routes can result in direct accidental and intentional impacts (**Appendix I**) over time. **Direct adverse**
impacts related to designation could include habitat degradation adjacent to routes designated open or limited and short or long-term displacement of affected wildlife from specific portions of their territories, or from the entire planning area, over time.

However, these impacts have been minimized to the degree feasible through route network design. **Other direct impacts anticipated as a result of implementing this alternative could include minor, short term displacement of sensitive species residing near routes proposed for rehabilitation, as well as areas proposed for fencing, barrier installation and vehicle turn-around work**. Similar to above, this potential **displacement has been greatly minimized by the incorporation of an onsite agency staff preview of structure installation sites and closed routes to be rehabilitated, including where rehabilitation materials may be coming from.** Such a preview allows site-specific evaluations to be made, including whether or not a seasonal restriction or onsite resource monitor is needed, or whether an additional level of environmental analysis or outside-agency consultation is necessary.

Neither desert bighorn sheep, nor identified bat species, would be directly impacted in an adverse manner by finalizing the existing emergency route network (No Action Alternative). No suitable habitat for either of these species would be disturbed.

Should a situation of potential harm to desert bighorn sheep or bats arise, or a potential for adverse modification of these species' habitats, both of which would be identified in the site-specific evaluation of an implementation action, and additional environmental analysis and/or conference with the CDFG may be required. If monitoring shows the final approved route network facilitates human visitation to specific bat roosts/ringtail or riparian habitat, **additional environmental analysis would be required to install mineshaft gating that allows wildlife entry but prohibits human entry, and/or riparian area fencing**. Inappropriate human visitation of mines can cause roost abandonment by bats; and in relation to riparian areas, inappropriate human visitation can cause avian nesting failure, loss of mammal watering/feeding sites and a decrease in functioning condition.

Existing routes accessing wildlife water catchments, or "game-bird guzzlers" that assist in maintaining prey base for sensitive wildlife such as raptors, are closed under both alternatives. Pedestrian access would be necessitated for regular guzzler monitoring throughout much of the planning unit, though this required **pedestrian access is a short distance (0.1-0.5 mile) from routes proposed for open designation**, or from non-designated routes existing on private land. Should maintenance activities require further vehicle access, the BLM Field Manager allowing such use, subject to pertinent stipulations could issue a specific letter of authorization.

Direct beneficial impacts over and above the current situation, associated with route signage/maintenance, improved turn-a-rounds and rehabilitation of closed routes, could be substantial. These would include **improved suitable habitat for the large majority of identified sensitive wildlife species** within the planning area, as well as **a reduction in route use degradation of wildlife habitat, animal mortality and displacement**.

Indirect impacts of No Action related to sensitive wildlife would include the likelihood of minor vehicle travel-related habitat structure (soil, water, vegetation, boulders, mineshafts) disturbance, alteration (including fire and weed influences) or removal; as well as human presence-related disturbance, in the immediate proximity of designated open routes. These indirect impacts would be anticipated to occur over time to various degrees on different routes, as a result of vehicle straying/turning, parking and camping. Monitoring of route conditions throughout the entire approved network, and implementation of corrective actions, would minimize some of the adverse nature of these potential indirect impacts.

A high potential for weed establishment and fire occurrence is considered a likely indirect impact of vehicle use on any approved route network for the planning unit and is considered to be of less magnitude with this alternative in relation to the Proposed Action. Such an indirect impact could affect small numbers of sensitive wildlife species whose territories encompass open routes, in relation to **forage nutrition, fire mortality rates and/or the appropriate spacing of escape cover**. **The two indirect impacts of weeds and fire considered collectively, also pose a high potential for large-scale vegetative type conversion**, affecting larger numbers of identified sensitive wildlife species in particular areas.

The number of routes designated open in this alternative relative to the Proposed Action, would have less of a negative effect upon some of the planning unit's biotic resources, if approved. However, this negative effect is anticipated to be fairly minor, over time, in relation to the specific set of routes proposed for open status and identified sensitive species. Overall **fragmentation of sensitive wildlife habitat related to the No Action Alternative is thought to be moderately lower than that related to the Proposed Action**. This impact is considered particularly important for raptors and desert bighorn sheep, and in general, much less so for various breeding birds and bats.

Should supplemental implementation actions (bat roost grating, riparian area fencing, end-of-road identification, vehicle turn-around improvements and installation of barriers) occur following adoption of a final vehicle access network for this Planning Unit, **limited residual impacts to sensitive wildlife species** would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative. **If these supplemental implementation actions were not to occur, residual impacts such as increased animal mortality or displacement and habitat degradation over and above that currently occurring, are likely to occur to some degree at specific wildlife habitat locations (Appendix I).**

Due to the nature and severity of sensitive wildlife habitat impacts occurring in the "Sweetwater Canyon" vicinity at the time of emergency route designation, **no route was designated that would directly access this area, a popular recreation destination.** Following publication of the emergency route network, the level of soil and vegetative impacts documented in the vicinity of this site and the degree of public input received, demonstrated that vehicle use needs/desires were high. **Employment of a high level of route signing, boulder and/or "vertical mulch" lining, parking area installation, mine shaft/adit gating, as well as fencing, have been identified as potential means of providing vehicular access to this destination in a manner conducive to rehabilitation and protection of sensitive specie habitat.**

Overall, the No Action Alternative differs moderately from the Proposed Action in relation to sensitive wildlife protection and management within this planning unit. **A few less "challenge" routes** have been designated open in this alternative, that could potentially result in minor vehicle damage to supporting soils/habitat structure; as well as some degree of sensitive wildlife habitat degradation, animal displacement and/or mortality. **The potential for indirect impacts (fire, weeds, vegetative type conversion) and residual impacts (specifically, direct impacts related to lack of project implementation), as well as wildlife population fragmentation, is considered moderately lower with the No Action Alternative when compared to the Proposed Action.**

<u>Soils/Erosion</u>

The **open (124.4 miles)** and **limited use (3.5 miles) routes** designated in this alternative have been in existence for 5 to 50 or more years. **Further direct soil impacts within the disturbed confines of these routes is considered unlikely, though accelerated erosion could occur on many in the future, dependent on type, intensity and frequency of vehicle use, affected terrain and soil strata, as well as the season of vehicle use.**

For routes proposed for closure (419.1 miles), direct, positive soil impacts are expected over time. Use of pitting, scarification and vertical mulching reclamation techniques is anticipated to accelerate soil growth and minimize potential erosion problems where it is applied. In cases **where natural rehabilitation is occurring on currently closed routes, this growth process would continue and the soils under the route would continue to improve and erosion potentials continue to decline, unless disturbed by renewed vehicle use.** This alternative would result in slightly more soil improvement and lower erosion potentials over time, when compared to the Proposed Action, as it would result in a 39.1 mile increase in closed route mileage. Direct aspects of soil improvement and re-vegetation occurring on a few of the 28.5 miles of currently closed routes considered for renewed vehicle use in the Proposed Action, would similarly be slowed, halted or reversed if designated open or limited.

Adverse indirect impacts of this alternative related to soils and erosion potentials, would include the likelihood of minor vehicle travel-related soil disturbance in the immediate proximity of designated open routes. On some routes, this soil disturbance, in turn, would increase the erosion potential. Monitoring of route conditions throughout the entire route network, as prescribed in the CDCA Plan, and implementation of corrective actions, would minimize the severity of these impacts.

Route reclamation efforts proposed would facilitate soil development/improvement on several designated closed routes and limit further soil/erosion damage on still others. In general, indirect beneficial impacts of both alternatives in relation to soils and erosion potentials within the planning unit are considered highly positive and limited in occurrence.

A residual impact of accelerated erosion, particularly gully, rill and "washboard-related" erosion, is likely to occur along specific open routes in the central (West Ord and Ord Mtns.) and southeast (Cinnamon Hills) portions of the planning unit over time. Soils in these areas are highly erosive and related adverse residual impacts are considerably magnified in high vehicle use areas and where slope extremes are encountered. However, **vehicle use-related impacts in these highly erosive soil areas have been minimized through the incorporation of several measures into the No Action Alternative.** These measures include the **minimization of slope extremes during route maintenance activities**; the **facilitation of vehicle turn-around areas on dead-end roads**; the **implementation of line-of-sight and "end-of-road" route signage; "vertical mulching" of designated closed routes**; and **barrier installation at specific locations.**

Overall, **the No Action Alternative differs moderately from the Proposed Action in relation to soils and erosion potentials.** A lower potential for accelerated erosion exists with this alternative, due to a lower number of open, limited use and high vehicle challenge routes, as well as higher degree of route reclamation.

<u>Threatened & Endangered Wildlife</u>

A total of 124.4 miles of routes would be designated open; a total of 3.5 miles of routes would be designated as limited use; and 419.1 miles of routes would be designated closed within the planning unit, as a result of the No Action Alternative. This represents a **28.5-mile reduction in open route mileage**; a **10.6-mile reduction in limited use route mileage**; and a **39.1-mile increase in closed route mileage,** in relation to the Proposed Action (refer to **Map C**, ***Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network***). **This alternative would retain and finalize the Emergency Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network currently in place** for the planning unit. However, this alternative would also add to this network **2 open route miles** (SJ34/SJ35) to provide vehicle access to "Sweetwater Canyon" and "Finger Rock". This emergency network would also be amended to recognize **3.5 limited use route miles** (SJL4/SJL8), which provide vehicle access to a communications site on Ord Mountain and a wildlife water catchment area in East Stoddard Valley.

Desert tortoises are not likely to be directly impacted in an adverse manner by implementation work detailed in the No Action Alternative. No suitable habitat for this species is anticipated to be disturbed. with the exception of minor hand-removal of dead desert shrubs from portions of desert tortoise habitat under the direction of agency biologists, when removal would be carefully spaced and would not affect any animal burrow. **Should a situation of potential harm to desert tortoises or a potential for adverse tortoise habitat modification be identified in the site-specific evaluation of an implementation action associated with this alternative, additional environmental analysis and/or consultation with the FWS and CDFG would be required.**

Direct beneficial impacts over and above the current situation, associated with improved route signage, route maintenance, improved vehicle turn-a-rounds and rehabilitation of closed routes, could be substantial. These would include improved suitable habitat for tortoises within the planning area over time, as well as a reduction in current route use degradation of tortoise habitat, animal mortality and displacement.

Indirect impacts of this alternative related to desert tortoises would include the likelihood of minor vehicle travel-related habitat structure (soil, water, vegetation, boulders) disturbance, including fire and weed influences, or removal; as well as human presence-related disturbance, in the immediate proximity of designated open routes. These indirect impacts would be anticipated to occur over time to various degrees on different routes, as a result of vehicle straying/turning, intentional proliferation, parking and camping. Monitoring of route conditions throughout the entire approved route network, as prescribed herein, and implementation of corrective actions, would minimize some of the adverse nature of these potential indirect impacts to the tortoise.

A high potential for minor habitat structure alteration, weed establishment and fire occurrence is considered a likely indirect impact of vehicle use on any approved route network for the planning unit. These **indirect impacts could affect small numbers of tortoises whose territories encompass open routes, in relation to forage nutrition and/or the appropriate spacing of escape cover.**

The indirect impacts of roads, potential weeds/fire considered collectively, also poses a **high potential for large-scale vegetative type conversion**, affecting larger numbers of desert tortoise in specific areas. In general, **adverse indirect impacts to tortoises occurring within the planning unit as a consequence of the No Action Alternative are considered negative and limited in occurrence, but moderately lower in scope than that anticipated for the Proposed Action.**

Overall fragmentation of desert tortoise habitat related to the current route network is thought to be moderately lower than that related to the Proposed Action. However, information pertinent to tortoise habitat and population fragmentation related to vehicles/route use is extremely sparse. Which in many ways suggests the use of a **"best management approach"**, or conservative approach, in finalizing any vehicle route network.

Should supplemental implementation actions (fencing, end-of-road identification, vehicle turn-around improvements and barriers) occur following adoption of a final vehicle access network, **limited residual impacts to desert tortoises are anticipated as a result of the No Action Alternative.** These residual impacts would include continued or increased habitat degradation and animal mortality over time. **If these supplemental implementation actions were not to occur, residual impacts above that currently occurring are likely to occur to some degree at specific tortoise habitat locations (Appendix I).**

In addition, due to the nature and severity of route proliferation and tortoise habitat impacts occurring in the Cinnamon Hills at the time of emergency route designation, **no route was designated that would directly access "Finger Rock", a popular recreation destination.** Following publication of the emergency route network, the level of soil/vegetative impacts documented in the vicinity of this site and the degree of public input received, demonstrated that vehicle use needs/desires were high. **Employment of a high level of route signing, boulder and/or "vertical mulch" lining, as well as fencing, have been identified as potential means of providing vehicular access to this destination in a manner conducive to rehabilitation of proximal routes proposed for closure.**

Overall, the **No Action Alternative differs moderately from the Proposed Action in relation to desert tortoise protection and management** within this planning unit. **A few less "challenge" routes** have been designated open in this alternative, that could potentially result in minor vehicle damage to supporting soils/habitat structure in a few tortoise use areas; as well as some degree of tortoise habitat degradation, animal displacement and/or mortality. **The potential for indirect impacts (fire, weeds, vegetative type conversion) and residual impacts (direct impacts related to lack of implementation), as well as tortoise population fragmentation, is also considered moderately lower with the No Action Alternative when compared to the Proposed Action.**

No adverse modification of designated desert tortoise critical habitat is anticipated to occur as the result of this alternative, and the **potential for project-related incidental take of a threatened species is considered minimal.** However, **this alternative implements several Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan Actions and would "positively affect" the species, thus formal Section 7 Consultation per the Federal Endangered Species Act is required. Formal Conference with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) is similarly required** by the State Endangered Species Act. It is recommended that such consultation take the form of a BLM request to the FWS and CDFG for a **"Positive Affect Concurrence"** response letter, following selection of an agency-preferred alternative (**Appendix IX**).

Scenic Resources

Signing of open and limited routes would affect scenic resources directly, through the addition of artificial, vertical obstructions in a primarily open landscape. This scenic resource impact would be slightly less with the No Action Alternative, based on the smaller number of routes designated as open. Maintenance of open and limited routes would affect scenic resources directly, by preventing vehicle use on some routes, and encouraging or discouraging such use on others. Again, this **scenic resource impact would be slightly less with the No Action Alternative, when compared to the Proposed Action**, due to the smaller number of designated open routes.

Rehabilitating portions of closed routes would also affect scenic resources directly, by reinstating natural appearances. This beneficial impact would be higher with the No Action Alternative, when compared to the Proposed Action.

Monitoring implementation would not affect scenic resources directly, but **implementing corrective actions per monitoring results could affect these resources directly**. Such corrective actions could result in promoting compliance with the designated route network, resulting in a rehabilitation of natural appearances. On the other hand, these corrective actions could result in further scenic resource degradation, if a particular route closure is not well accepted by the public, and/or if regular monitoring or enforced compliance intervals are lacking. **The greater number and "challenge" character of routes proposed open and limited in the Proposed Action, when compared to the No Action Alternative, could foster greater acceptance by specific user groups**.

Designation of all existing routes would affect scenic resources indirectly, by encouraging use of a specific network of open routes by the general public. Vehicle use on designated closed routes, some of which contribute to visual resource degradation in specific areas, would also be discouraged with an effective designation effort. Monitoring of route designation implementation too, would affect scenic resources indirectly, by activating development of corrective measures.

Continued use of open and limited routes would result in a residual scenic resource impact, as most of these roads were not created with regard to the scenic resources and related impacts are not easily mitigated without major reconstruction. **Residual scenic resource impacts associated with designated closed routes would be reduced, however, with the employment of "vertical mulching to the visual horizon" reclamation techniques.** Additionally, improper maintenance of routes could also result in route widening or proliferation, and thus would increase visual resource degradation in a residual manner. Ineffective rehabilitation of designated closed routes could promote route persistence or result in a greater impact upon visual resources than that which is occurring now. Ineffective monitoring, or ineffective corrective actions, could produce varying effects. **The extent of residual scenic resource impacts are considered slightly less with the No Action Alternative, when compared to the Proposed Action, based on this alternative's smaller number of designated open routes**.

Overall, the No **Action Alternative differs moderately from the Proposed Action in relation to scenic resources**. This is due primarily to this alternative's lower sign and fence-related visual impacts, as well as a lower level of residual impacts. However, the level of reclamation effort/cost is anticipated to be higher with this alternative, in comparison to the Proposed Action.

Wetland/Riparian Zones

The few springs sprinkled throughout this unit have all been influenced over the years by vehicle use, camping, parking and intentional route proliferation in their proximity. **The current Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network approved very few direct vehicle access routes to springs occurring on public land**. Rather, **this previous effort emphasized closure of the terminal end of such routes, at a distance of 0.25-0.5 mile from the actual spring riparian zone, and creation of a suitable turn-around/parking area at the newly designated terminus of such routes**. However, effective termination of vehicle use on these currently closed routes has yet to be achieved at several spring sites, due to uncompleted route improvements and/or ineffective barrier placement.

This alternative differs from the Proposed Action in that **several routes accessing springs (SJL5-Aztec Spring and SJL6-Goat Spring) and the vicinity of springs (SJL8-Willow and Sweetwater Springs,) which are required per authorized uses, are not addressed in the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network. Similarly, the route (SJ34) directly accessing the popular hunting/recreation area known as "Sweetwater Canyon" was not addressed**. The Sweetwater Canyon area contains a series of desert springs, high bio-diversity values and historic items of interest. **Uncontrolled vehicle activity in the canyon has a high potential to substantially impact associated riparian zones in an adverse manner, but a high vehicular access need for hunting and sight-seeing has been identified**.

Currently, open routes do provide vehicle access to the vicinity of **Aztec Spring (SV183), Coyote Hole Spring (OM20), Goat Spring (OM27), Quill Spring (OM24), Upper and Lower Sweetwater Springs (OM21)**, but 0.1-0.5 mile of hiking is required to directly access these springs. **The No Action Alternative would retain an open vehicle route (OM20) that accesses the 0.1-mile vicinity of Coyote Hole Spring.** The Proposed Action on the other hand, would close this route at a 0.25-mile distance from the spring, to minimize potential impacts to an important bat/wildlife water site and arrest current high rate of soil erosion.

The only other known direct impact to wetland and/or riparian zones as a consequence of this alternative would be beneficial. This benefit would consist of the protection resulting from completion of route reclamation and/or the installation of fencing/gates or barriers to exclude vehicle travel near the hydric soil areas of several desert springs (**Aztec, Coyote Hole, Goat, Quill, Upper Sweetwater. Lower Sweetwater and Willow**).

Indirect adverse impacts to wetland and riparian zones of this planning unit would include a low potential for minor vehicle travel, parking, camping and intentional route proliferation-related soil disturbance in proximity to the parking areas developed for pedestrian access to springs. A similar **potential for weed establishment and fire occurrence** exists at such parking areas, that could also negatively impact native vegetation adjacent to open routes originating from these parking and turn-around areas.

Other than a high potential for vehicle impacts to the area around Coyote Hole Spring, no residual impacts to wetlands or riparian zones within this planning unit, potentially resulting from the No Action Alternative, have been identified.

Overall, the No Action Alternative differs marginally from the Proposed Action in relation to wetland and riparian zone protection and management. The difference between the two is really a **recognition of established use patterns and the accelerating vehicle use impacts at one spring site. This alternative would retain one specific route (OM20) which accesses the 0.1 mile vicinity of Coyote Hole Spring, and the Proposed Action would close this same route at a distance of 0.25 mile from the spring.**

XI. CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Cumulative impacts are those impacts which result from incremental impacts of an action, decision, or project in combination with other past, present and reasonable foreseeable future actions, regardless of the agency (Federal or non-federal) or person undertaking such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions that have similar impacts. This section analyzes resource management and development actions planned or projected to occur with both alternatives discussed in this environmental assessment.

Projections, which have been developed for analytical purposes only, are based on current conditions/trends and represent a best professional estimate of reasonably foreseeable future actions or potential developments. Unforeseen changes in such factors as economics and demand, as well as Federal, State and local laws/policies, could result in different outcomes than those projected for this analysis.

For the purposes of a cumulative impact analysis, the following regional actions/developments are being considered:

Borax Mine Proposed Expansion

The potential for a proposed **expansion in mineral reserve use** associated with the U.S. Borax Processing Operation near Boron, California has been identified as a reasonably foreseeable development. If mineral reserves are developed within the **northern half of the Fremont-Kramer Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit (FKCHU)**, located considerably east of where current reserve mining occurs, it could have bearing on **desert tortoise conservation** throughout this unit. The second largest of four units designated as critical for desert tortoise survival, an expansion of mining operations could encompass, fragment and render unsuitable, a small to a considerable portion of the westernmost tortoise critical habitat in the West Mojave Desert. Or it could have a minimal effect on this unit, depending on the scope and location of mine expansion. A high potential mineral zone has been recorded both east and west of U.S. 395, north of State Highway 58.

Again, depending on the mining configuration finally approved, expanded mineral reserve use could also adversely impact a large percentage of the **Mojave Saltbush Unusual Plant Assemblage** and habitat considered essential to the **State-listed Mohave ground squirrel** (*Spermophilus mohavensis*). It could also adversely impact a large percentage of the known habitat for another endemic species, the **BLM-designated sensitive plant, Barstow Woolly Sunflower** (*Eriophyllum mohavensis*).

Mitigation designed to minimize incidental take of tortoises and Mohave ground squirrels would likely be required for expanded mining operations. Mitigation designed to avoid impacts to sensitive plants and minimize impacts to the plant assemblage might also be required, though a net loss of these species' habitat would still likely occur. Similarly, **a net tortoise critical habitat loss would occur**. However, **some form of compensation would likely be required to offset any residual impact associated with expansion-related tortoise habitat loss**. Onsite mitigation measures would likely include **biotic inventory/monitoring, tortoise translocation and fencing to prohibit tortoise travel into potential harm areas. Compensation could take the form of land acquisition or habitat improvement.**

The latter could involve **actions ranging from road fencing to implementation of route designation and closed route rehabilitation**. Such habitat acquisition/improvement would likely be **targeted to occur within the immediate area of impact**, i.e., the **FKCHU**.

Fort Irwin National Training Center Proposed Expansion

The potential for a proposed **expansion of U.S. Army's National Training Center** at Fort Irwin, in some configuration, has been identified as a reasonably foreseeable development. It has bearing on **desert tortoise conservation, raptor use, recreation and vehicle access** throughout the **eastern half of the Superior-Cronese Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit (SCCHU)**, within the West Mojave Desert. This expansion would likely occur in the largest of four units designated as critical to the survival of the desert tortoise. Tank and support training activities associated with previous expansion proposals could encompass, fragment and render unsuitable, a considerable portion of the least degraded and most disease-free critical habitat designated for the desert tortoise. It could even jeopardize the continued existence of this species, per an earlier FWS biological opinion addressing an expansion configuration proposal. Even if a non-jeopardy configuration could be developed, **a greater emphasis on desert tortoise conservation would be necessitated on the remainder of public lands in the SCCHU, as well as in other tortoise units, i.e., the Ord-Rodman and Pinto Mountain units**.

Training activities associated with potential base expansion configurations could also adversely impact, or even compromise, raptor use in a large portion of the **Superior Valley Key Raptor Area. Should this occur, raptor management may need to be emphasized to a higher degree in the three remaining Key Raptor Areas of the West Mojave Desert** (Harper Dry Lake, Ord Mountains and Robber's Roost), to ensure population viability.

Recreation opportunities and vehicle access would be eliminated in the northern portions of the West Mojave Desert encompassed by the expanded military base configuration. This project consequence may not be easily mitigated and would result in an adverse residual impact.

Mitigation measures designed to minimize incidental take of tortoises would likely be required, should base expansion be approved by Congress. Similarly, **some form of compensation would likely be required to offset any residual impact associated with expansion-related habitat degradation or loss**, though a net loss of habitat designated as critical to the survival of the species would still occur. Onsite measures would likely include some degree of **biotic inventory/monitoring, tortoise translocation and fencing to prohibit tortoise travel into potential harm areas**. Maintenance of viable tortoise populations in an expanded base would likely be attempted, within the context of military training activities, though the likelihood of achieving this is questionable. Large-scale tortoise translocation into identified reserves located on public or base lands may even be attempted, should expansion be approved. **Compensation for degradation/loss of habitat could take the form of critical habitat acquisition or improvement in identified reserves.** The latter could involve **actions ranging from road fencing to implementation of route designation/closed route rehabilitation**. Such habitat acquisition or improvement would likely be **targeted to occur within the immediate area of proposed impact**, i.e., the **SCCHU**.

Increased Adjacent Private Land Development and Growth

Private lands located adjacent to the Planning Area are already being developed in earnest and continued growth has been identified as a reasonably foreseeable development. This has bearing on **desert tortoise conservation, bighorn sheep and raptor use, bat and neotropical bird conservation, sensitive plant protection, recreation and vehicle access** throughout the **entire Ord-Rodman Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit (ORCHU)** and elsewhere in the West Mojave Desert. This growth mirrors that occurring in the region, particularly in the vicinity of Interstate Highway 15 and the Lenwood Factory Merchants Mall. A **new housing tract was also recently constructed to the south of the Planning Area** in Lucerne Valley, with additional recreational pressure anticipated, as well as **increases in vehicle travel between Barstow, Newberry Springs and Lucerne Valley**.

In relation to desert tortoises in the West Mojave Desert, **private land development is anticipated to have its greatest impact in the Ord-Rodman Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit**, and less so in the Fremont-Kramer, Superior-Cronese and Pinto Basin Units. Such development is not anticipated to increase drastically within the Ord Mountain Planning Unit itself, but it is likely to in the greater Barstow area, located to the north, and in Lucerne Valley, located to the south. **Increased visitation and recreation use associated with the public lands in the Ord Mountains located between these two growing locales is likely to occur with such development.**

Although Federal land consolidation is recognized as a necessary action related to the Ord-Rodman Critical Habitat Unit, habitat improvement and population monitoring are considered likely to overshadow land acquisition needs very quickly. **Mitigation measures designed to minimize incidental take of tortoises (presence & absence and/ or clearance surveys, translocation) would be required prior to surface-disturbing activities in the region. Impacts to habitat would be required to follow a standard compensation process, to be developed through the West Mojave Coordinated Management Plan.** Required compensation would be applied to recovery plan objectives, such as **habitat acquisition and control of vehicle use in identified tortoise reserves.**

Interstate Highway 15 Expansion

This project is in its midterm planning stages, with an emphasis on **increasing traffic lanes in the vicinity of Barstow and the Lenwood Factory Merchants Mall**. Due to the fact that vehicle travel to and through the region would be facilitated as a result of the project, it is **anticipated to increase the amount of vehicular visitation to adjacent public lands**. The project has been identified as a reasonably foreseeable development that has bearing on **desert tortoise conservation, bat and neotropical bird conservation, recreation and vehicle access** in **the western half of the Ord-Rodman Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit (ORCHU).**

Mitigation designed to minimize incidental take of tortoises during road construction is being required, including **biotic inventory, translocation of tortoises, temporary or permanent fencing and monitoring.** A net tortoise habitat loss would occur, though compensation is being required to offset this residual impact. Required **compensation may take the form of land acquisition or habitat** improvement, depending on the outcome of current negotiations. The latter could involve **actions ranging from road fencing to implementation of route designation and closed route rehabilitation**. The **compensation associated with this proposed action has been recommended to take the form of funding necessary for route designation and closed route rehabilitation efforts in the closest desert tortoise critical habitat unit, which is the ORCHU.**

San Bernardino County Landfill Expansion/Management

This **project** involves public lands identified for conveyance to the County of San Bernardino for use in future landfill expansion and transfer station management. One of these is located immediately adjacent to the Planning Area (Barstow Landfill). When this latter landfill expands, it is anticipated to result in a slight reduction of critical habitat managed for the benefit of the tortoise in the **western half of the Ord-Rodman Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit (ORCHU)**. Expansion also has the potential to **increase public visitation in the remaining portion of the unit**, particularly to common dumping sites such as washes and mines. As such, this action has been identified as a reasonably foreseeable development that has bearing on **desert tortoise, bat and neotropical bird conservation, recreation and vehicle access** within the Planning Area.

Mitigation designed to minimize incidental take of tortoises prior to actual Barstow Landfill expansion would likely be required, including **biotic inventory, translocation of tortoises into the ORCHU and permanent fencing.** A net tortoise critical habitat loss would occur. Compensation would be required to offset residual impacts resulting from the conveyance of designated critical habitat to the County for landfill purposes. Required **compensation is planned to take the form of land acquisition** in the western portion of the **SCCHU.**

Venture Star Proposal

Several West Mojave Desert locales are currently being evaluated for **siting of the first private, commercial satellite launch facility**, including one site situated slightly north of **Harper Dry Lake**, in the **western half of the Superior-Cronese Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit (SCCHU)**. An **alternative site under consideration** is located in the **southern half of the Fremont-Kramer Critical Habitat Unit (FKCHU)**. Several other areas in the country are being evaluated as well. Siting and subsequent human visitation impacts have been identified as potential developments that would have bearing on **desert tortoise conservation, bat and neotropical bird conservation, recreation and vehicle access** throughout either the southern half of **FKCHU**, if this facility were constructed.

Facility siting impacts could result in the loss of a tortoise critical habitat area exceeding an entire township (36 square miles). **Subsequent human visitation would result in additional degradation of tortoise critical habitat in the vicinity of this facility.**

If constructed near Harper Dry Lake, the project could also adversely impact, or even compromise, raptor use in a large portion of the **Harper Dry Lake Key Raptor Area. Should this occur, raptor management may need to be emphasized to a higher degree in the three remaining Key Raptor Areas of the West Mojave Desert** (Superior Lake, Ord Mountains and Robber's Roost), to ensure population viability.

Open space recreation opportunities and vehicle access would be eliminated in a township-sized area, wherever the facility was constructed in the West Mojave Desert. Sightseeing recreation would likely increase regionally, with such a development. However, the quality of open space recreation might decrease in the immediate vicinity of such a facility, as a consequence of sightseeing impact.

Mitigation measures designed to minimize incidental take of tortoises would likely be required, should the facility development occur. **Some form of compensation would likely be required to offset any residual habitat degradation or loss,** though a net loss of habitat designated as critical to the survival of the species would still be a consequence. Onsite measures would likely include some degree of **biotic inventory/monitoring, tortoise translocation and fencing to prohibit tortoise travel into potential harm areas**. Large-scale tortoise translocation into identified reserves located on public lands may even be attempted, if approved. **Compensation for degradation and loss of habitat could take the form of critical habitat acquisition or improvement in identified reserves.** The latter could involve **actions ranging from road fencing to implementation of route designation/closed route rehabilitation**. Such habitat acquisition or improvement would likely be **targeted to occur within the immediate area of proposed impact**, i.e., the **SCCHU** or the **FKCHU**.

Western Mojave Land Tenure Adjustment Program

A BLM-USAF **land acquisition and exchange project designed to secure flight test space** for Edwards Air Force Base (EAFB) operations and concurrently **consolidate public lands for the benefit of threatened, endangered and sensitive wildlife** has been occurring in the West Mojave Desert for about ten years. North of State Highway 58, these consolidation lands are located to the **west of Fort Irwin and to the east of State Highway 395, encompassing the north portion of the Fremont-Kramer Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit (FKCHU) and the Superior-Cronese Critical Habitat Unit.** South of State Highway 58, the consolidation zone is located **east of EAFB westward to the Mojave River, encompassing the south portion of the FKCHU**. Disposal acreage is located along the Interstate 15 corridor between Barstow and Victorville. This highly successful program has been identified as a reasonably foreseeable development that has bearing on **desert tortoise conservation, bat and neotropical bird conservation, raptor use, recreation and vehicle access** throughout the **FKCHU/SCCHU**.

Mitigation designed to minimize incidental take of tortoises on these public-to-private lands prior to development is required, including **biotic inventory and translocation of tortoises into adjacent tortoise habitat areas.** A net tortoise habitat loss theoretically occurs with the program, but most identified disposal lands are highly degraded, support few tortoises and are located in an area of high "checkerboard" public-private land ownership. The positive benefit of consolidated public land and the ability to manage high quality tortoise habitat in a landscape fashion has been found to far outweigh the tortoise habitat loss associated with these disposal lands.

Catellus-Wildlands Exchange-Consolidation Project

The potential for a joint **land exchange/consolidation project for the benefit of America's threatened & endangered species and wilderness** has been proposed by Wildlands. This exchange would involve conversion of a significant amount of wilderness in-holdings from private hands to public, and would facilitate a similar **conversion of a large amount of critical tortoise habitat acreage from private to public ownership**. A substantial amount of Catellus land occurring within the planning unit has recently been acquired by the Federal Government in the first phase of this Federal land exchange project. Associated residual impacts would include a more consolidated public land block within the Ord-Rodman Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit, facilitating wildlife and public land management. **Reduced levels of easement acquisition would be required to secure a long-term vehicle access route network in the planning unit in future phases of this exchange**. However, additional route designation and closed route rehabilitation would also be necessitated with the conversion of these lands from private to public ownership.

West Mojave Desert Coordinated Management Plan

This plan is an ongoing **regional Planning Effort** that **addresses wildlife conservation and local community growth/development**. The plan itself is intended to serve as the basis for a Habitat Conservation Plan which will facilitate acquisition of building and other action permits, in relation to threatened, endangered and sensitive wildlife species occurring within the West Mojave Desert. This regional plan will also act as a **vehicle to address Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan recommendations** and incorporate measures **designed to conserve other threatened, endangered and sensitive wildlife species** occurring in the region concurrently.

One of the prerequisites to completing this bio-regional plan is **to identify a means of implementing an adequate vehicle route access network; one that provides access to public lands and protects threatened, endangered and sensitive wildlife species**. Regional conservation assurances by cooperating regulatory agencies are difficult to issue for development-related habitat loss on private lands, when identified conservation reserves on public lands lack appropriate vehicle access controls. The Ord Mountain Route Designation Effort has been identified as a pilot, or model, for route designation and rehabilitation work throughout the West Mojave Desert.

The Planning Area is one of only a few large public land blocks of desert tortoise habitat in the West Mojave Desert and also one of the smaller critical habitat areas in this recovery unit. The preceding reasonable and foreseeable developments may all have some degree of influence on where desert tortoises will be conserved in the West Mojave Desert, or may have limited effect. These potential developments may or may not also have some degree of influence on how vehicle access and travel are addressed in a manner designed to best fulfill the public's vehicular access needs and concurrently protect threatened, endangered and sensitive wildlife like the desert tortoise. Such developments may also influence where the recreational destinations and desires of public land visitors are best accommodated. **There will likely be increased human pressure upon the Planning Unit and the resources it supports, in the near future**. There is a present need for compatibility/consistency with other regional planning efforts, and **an increasing need for established, maintained and monitored vehicle routes, to ensure continued viability of biotic resources and protection of features** throughout the West Mojave Desert.

The two alternatives discussed are not substantially different with respect to cumulative impacts to desert tortoise conservation, particularly in the context of the preceding reasonable and foreseeable developments. **Adoption of either alternative would not result in irreversible or irretrievable commitments on behalf of the BLM**. Dependent upon the outcome of the reasonable and foreseeable developments described above, **there will likely be a greater emphasis placed on biotic resource protection within the Planning Area over time**. Either alternative could serve as a pilot route designation effort applicable to the entire West Mojave Desert.

The two alternatives discussed are also not substantially different with respect to cumulative impacts of the outlined species/natural community protection strategies on other resources and uses occurring in the unit. **Ongoing and anticipated uses were prime considerations in applying protection strategies**. With either alternative, **routes required by various permitted uses would continue to be available for that use. General vehicle access per CDCA Plan guidelines has also been provided** with either alternative. Adoption of either alternative **would not result in irreversible or irretrievable commitments on behalf of the BLM**. The **Proposed Action would result in a few more designated open routes beyond that identified in the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network**, whereas the **No Action Alternative finalizes this latter network**.

XII. PREPARERS

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Harold Johnson - recreation and operations.
Steve Schmidtz - GIS Coordinator (TRW Contractor).
Barry Nelson - law enforcement/use patterns.
Robert Bornstein - use patterns.
Steve Bonar - outreach.
Sarah Cunkelman - archaeology.
Remijio Chavez - rangeland health, soil, water and air.
Brad Blomquist - recreation.
Mark Marshall - recreation/use patterns.
Shelly Jackson - GIS Coordinator.
Noel Wagner - use patterns.
A.J. Martin - outreach/existing use patterns.
Dave Frink - wilderness and scenic resources.
Larry Monroe - geology.
Edith Seehafer – air quality, solid waste.

NEPA Reviewer:

Edith Seehafer, Environmental Coordinator Date
Barstow Field Office, CA Desert District
Bureau of Land Management

XIII. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

Discussions with representatives of **San Bernardino County, California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)**, and the **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)** have occurred in relation to the Proposed Action in the course of its development, including Proposed Route Network map reviews. **Special emphasis has been placed upon coordinating with other regulatory agencies, and identifying conflicts with area landowners as well as public land lessees/permitted uses**.

Consultation on the Proposed Action per Section 7 of the ESA would be required, as this action would implement a recovery plan objective and result in a conservation benefit to the species. This formal **consultation is recommended to take the form of a BLM request to the FWS for a letter of Positive Affect Concurrence, in relation to Federal adoption of the Proposed Action (Appendix VI)**.

A similar BLM request to the CDFG for a letter of Positive Affect Concurrence, through formal conference procedures with CDFG, is also recommended (Appendix VI).

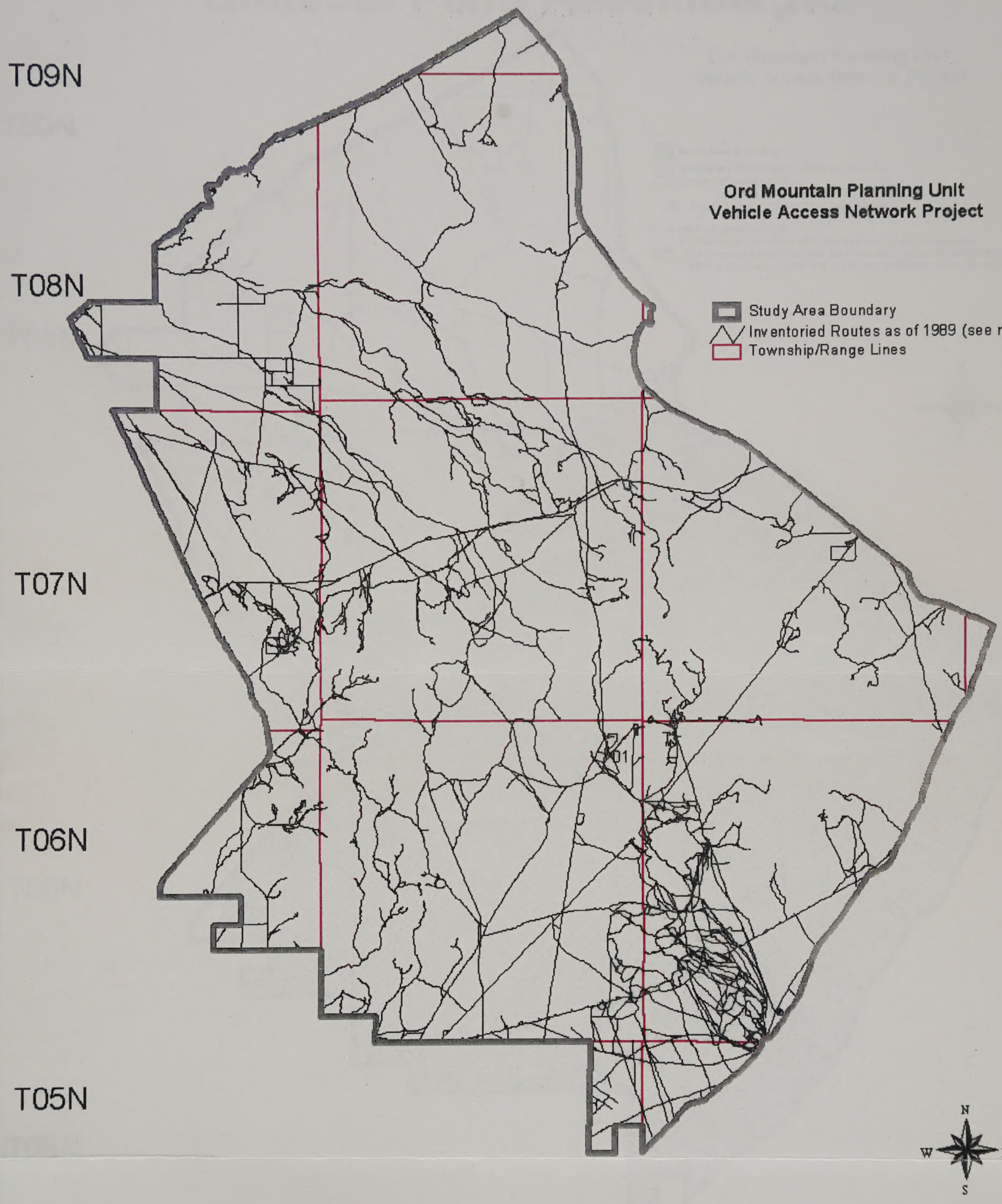
These consultations, discussions and **map reviews are anticipated to continue throughout the public review period following the record of decision being issued for the overall Proposed Action.** This environmental assessment would be made available to the public at as many community locations as feasible, to facilitate public review. **Individual route records of decision listed herein (Appendix V) would remain proposed route designations during the review period, and until such time as all agency and public comments received are thoroughly reviewed. Public concerns would then be fully considered in any final records of decision issued.**

XIV. ABBREVIATIONS

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
AMA	American Motorcyclist Association
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BP	Before Present
CDCA	California Desert Conservation Area
CDFG	California Department of Fish & Game
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CORVA	California Off Road Vehicle Association
DTC	Desert Tortoise Council
DTPC	Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee
DTEZ	Desert Tortoise Emphasis Zone
DWMA	Desert Wildlife Management Area
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
FKCHU	Fremont-Kramer Critical Desert Tortoise Habitat Unit
FWS	Fish and Wildlife Service
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
MUC	Multiple Use Class
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
OHV	Off-highway Vehicle
ORV	Off-road Vehicle
ORCHU	Ord-Rodman Critical Desert Tortoise Habitat Unit
PMCHU	Pinto Mountains Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat Unit
SCCHU	Superior-Cronese Critical Desert Tortoise Habitat Unit
SHPA	State Historic Preservation Act
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SWCBD	Southwest Center for Biological Diversity
UPA	Unusual Plant Assemblage
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDI	United States Department of the Interior

Map A

Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Inventory



Barstow Field Office
2601 Barstow Road
Barstow, CA 92311
(760) 252-6000

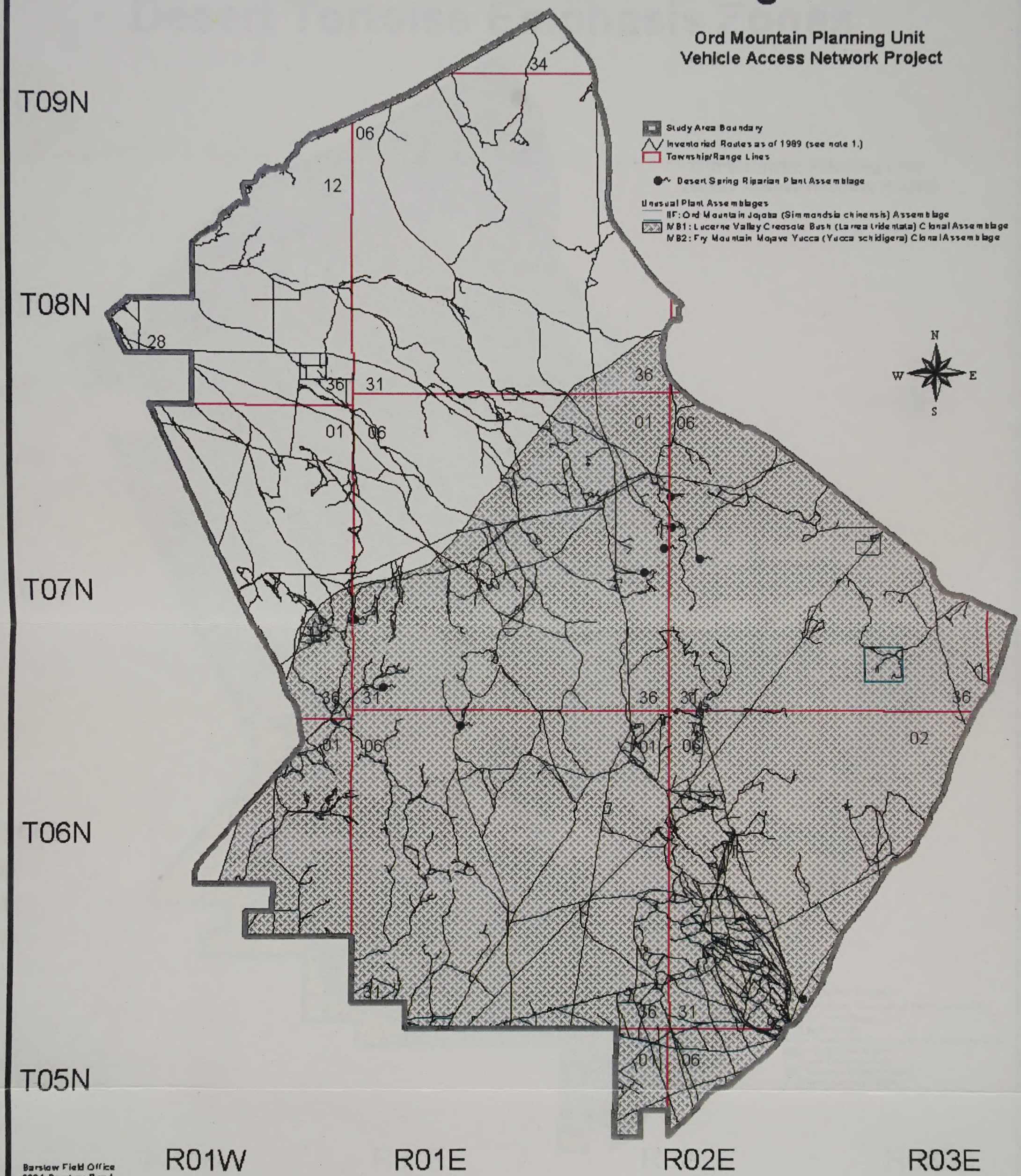
1 0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

1. This map represents a 100% vehicle route inventory as of 1989.

The Ord Mountain Pilot Project is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Barstow, California in San Bernardino County. The total area within the project boundary is 124,988 acres (195.3 square miles). Of this area, 102,135 acres (159.6 square miles) are managed by the BLM, 21,972 acres (34.3 square miles) are privately owned, and 881 acres (1.4 square miles) are state lands.

The route inventory portrayed on this map represents 662 linear miles of roads and trails that were inventoried through remote sensing techniques from 1989 imagery. Of these routes, 543.5 miles are on BLM lands, 116.6 miles are on private lands, and 2.9 miles are on state lands.

Map B1
Ord Mountain Biological Resources:
Unusual Plant Assemblages



Barstow Field Office
2601 Barstow Road
Barstow, CA 92311
(760) 252-6000

1 0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

1. This map represents a 100% vehicle route inventory as of 1989.

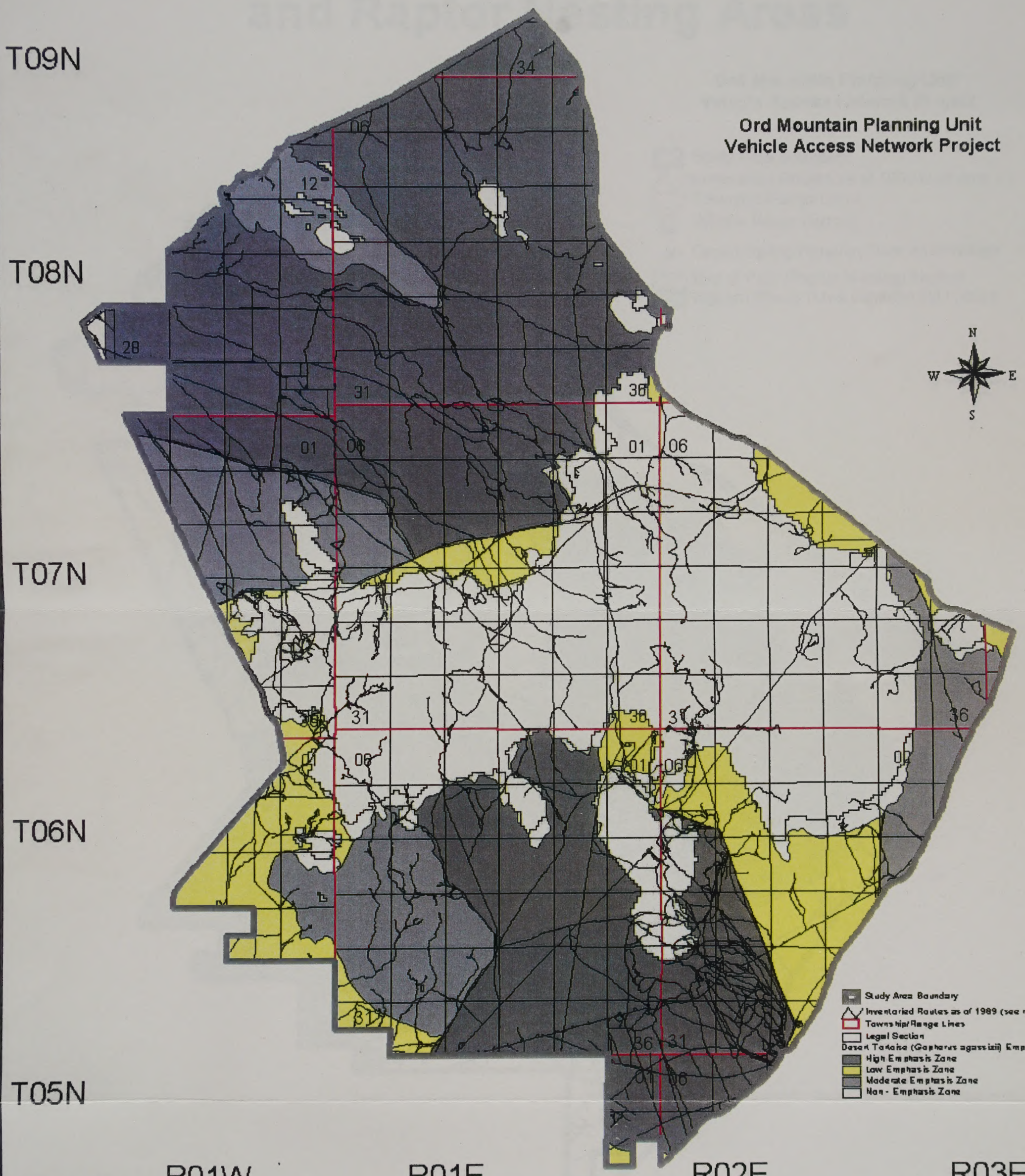
Sensitive plant locations are not depicted on this map for site security reasons.

The Ord Mountain Pilot Project is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Barstow, California in San Bernardino County. The total area within the project boundary is 124,988 acres (196.3 square miles). Of this area, 102,135 acres (159.6 square miles) are managed by the BLM, 21,972 acres (34.3 square miles) are privately owned, and 881 acres (1.4 square miles) are state lands.

The route inventory portrayed on this map represents 662 linear miles of roads and trails that were inventoried through remote sensing techniques from 1989 imagery. Of these routes, 547 miles are on BLM lands, 112.1 miles are on private lands, and 2.9 miles are on state lands.

Map B2

Ord Mountain Planning Unit
Desert Tortoise Emphasis Zones



Barstow Field Office
2601 Barstow Road
Barstow, CA 92311
(760) 252-8000

1 0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

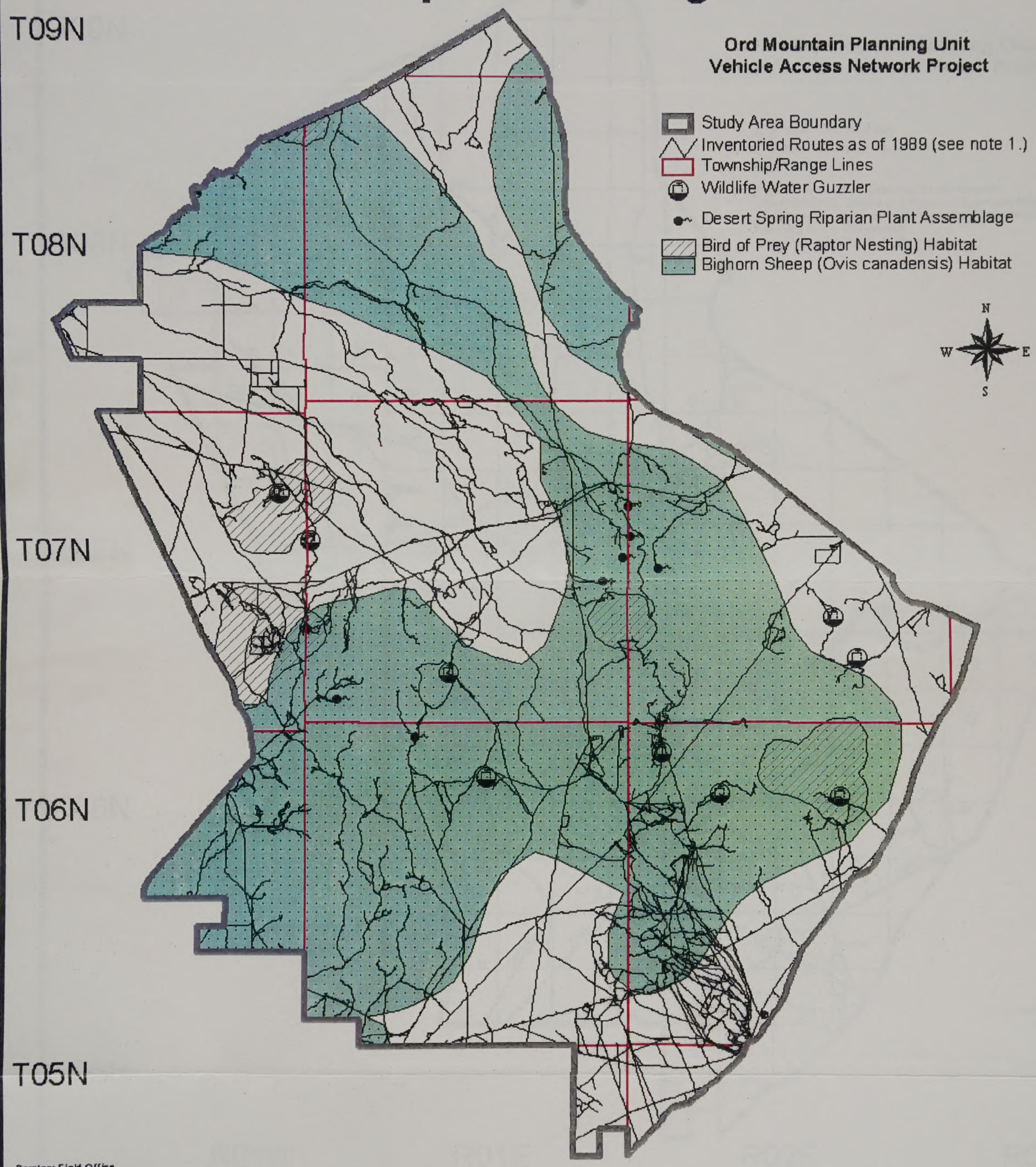
1. This map represents a 100% vehicle route inventory as of 1989.

The Ord Mountain Pilot Project is located approximately 16 miles southeast of Barstow, California in San Bernardino County. The total area within the project boundary is 124,988 acres (195.3 square miles). Of this area, 102,135 acres (159.6 square miles) are managed by the BLM, 21,972 acres (34.3 square miles) are privately owned, and 881 acres (1.4 square miles) are state lands.

The route inventory portrayed on this map represents 662 linear miles of roads and trails that were inventoried through remote sensing techniques from 1989 imagery. Of these routes, 547 miles are on BLM lands, 112.1 miles are on private lands, and 2.9 miles are on state lands.

Map B3

Ord Mountain Biological Resources: Bighorn Sheep Use Areas/Travel Corridors and Raptor Nesting Areas



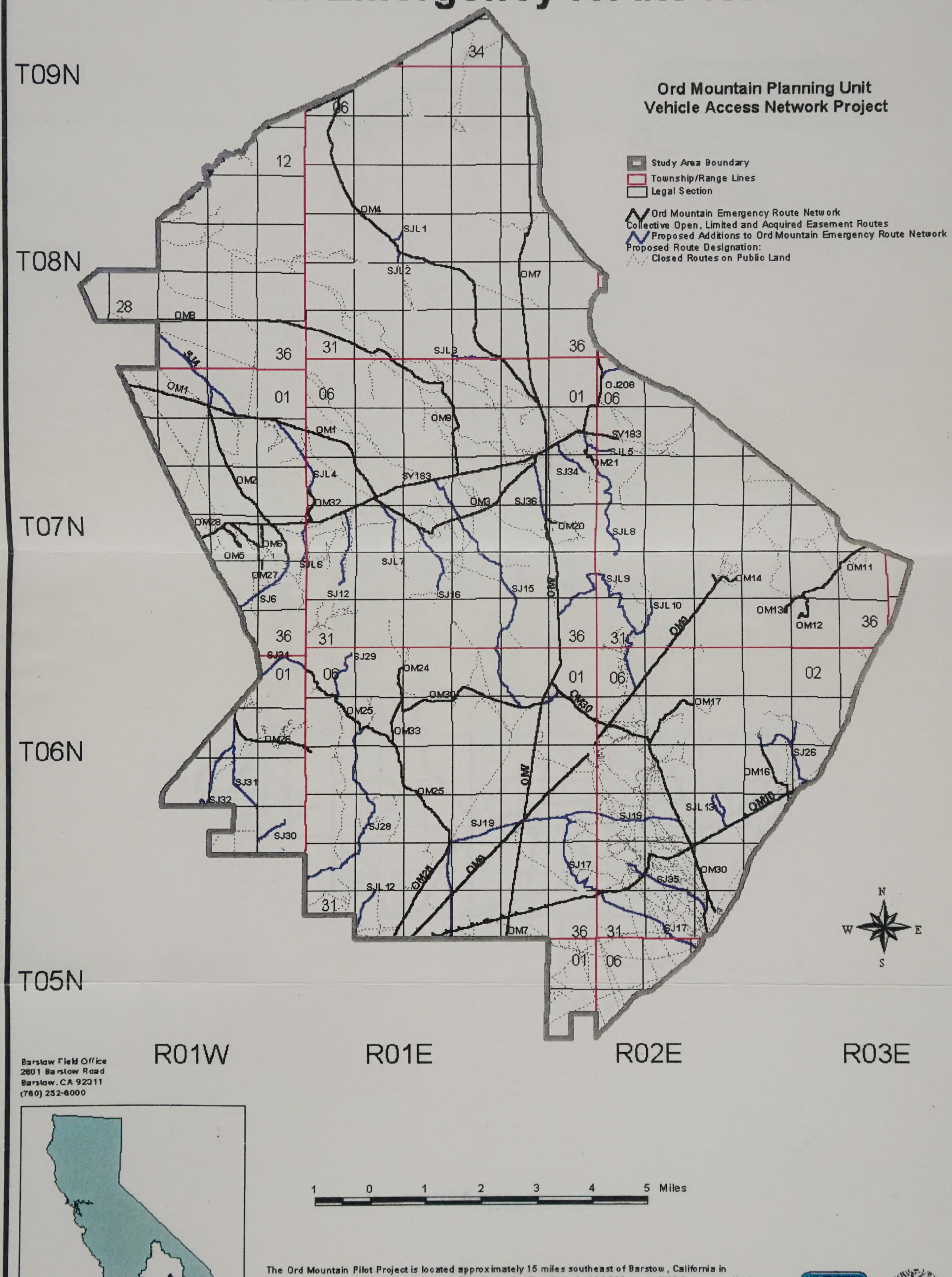
Barstow Field Office
2601 Barstow Road
Barstow, CA 92311
(760) 252-6000

1. This map represents a 100% vehicle route inventory as of 1989.

The Ord Mountain Pilot Project is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Barstow, California in San Bernardino County. The total area within the project boundary is 124,988 acres (195.3 square miles). Of this area, 102,135 acres (159.6 square miles) are managed by the BLM, 21,972 acres (34.3 square miles) are privately owned, and 881 acres (1.4 square miles) are state lands.

The route inventory portrayed on this map represents 662 linear miles of roads and trails that were inventoried through remote sensing techniques from 1989 imagery. Of these routes, 547 miles are on BLM lands, 112.1 miles are on private lands, and 2.9 miles are on state lands.

Map C
Proposed Additions to the Ord Mountain Emergency Route Network



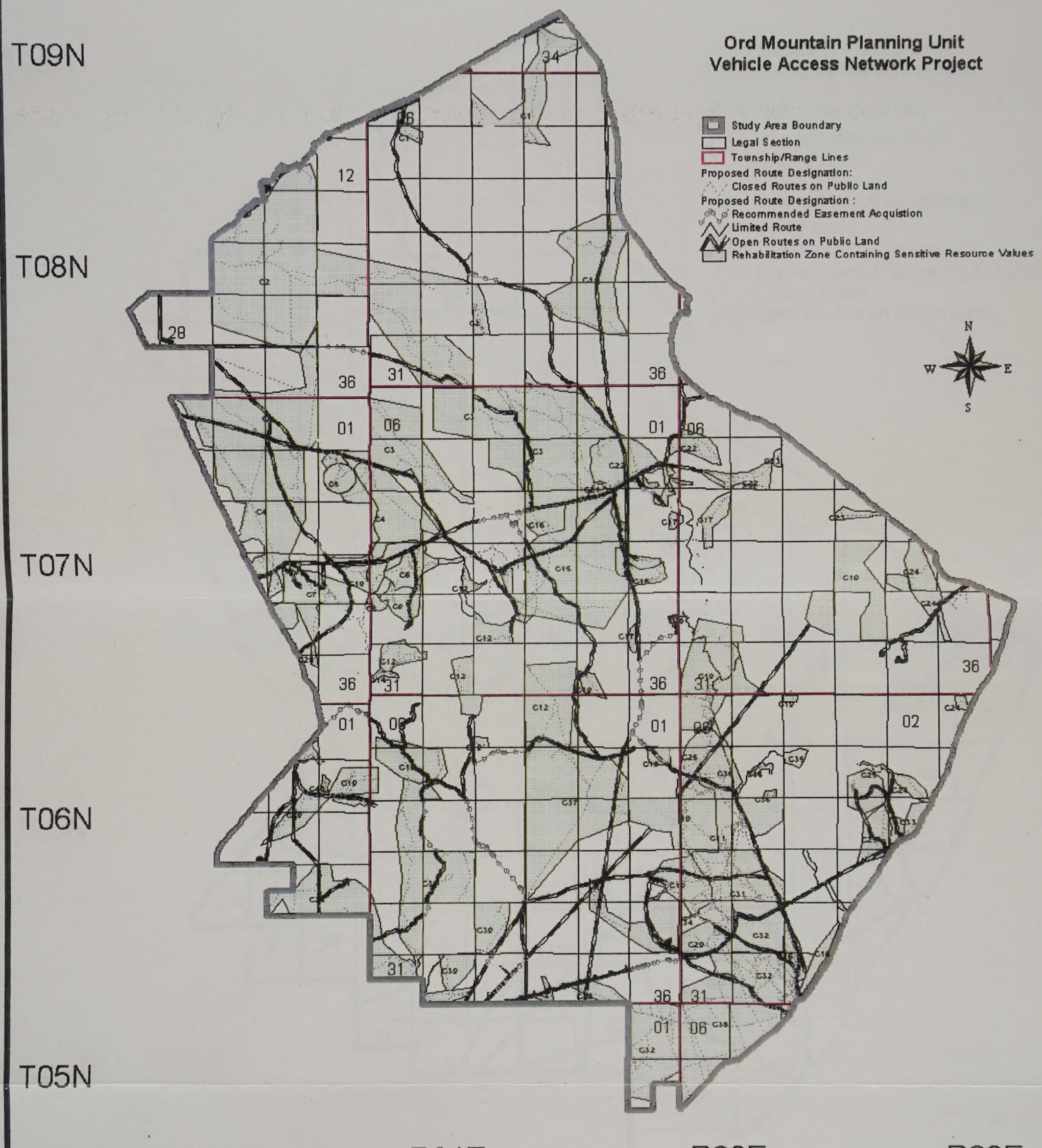
Ord Mountain Planning Unit
Vehicle Access Network Project

Barstow Field Office
2601 Barstow Road
Barstow, CA 92311
(760) 252-6000

1 0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

The Ord Mountain Pilot Project is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Barstow, California in San Bernardino County. The total area within the project boundary is 124,988 acres (195.3 square miles). Of this area, 102,135 acres (159.6 square miles) are managed by the BLM, 21,972 acres (34.3 square miles) are privately owned, and 881 acres (1.4 square miles) are state lands.

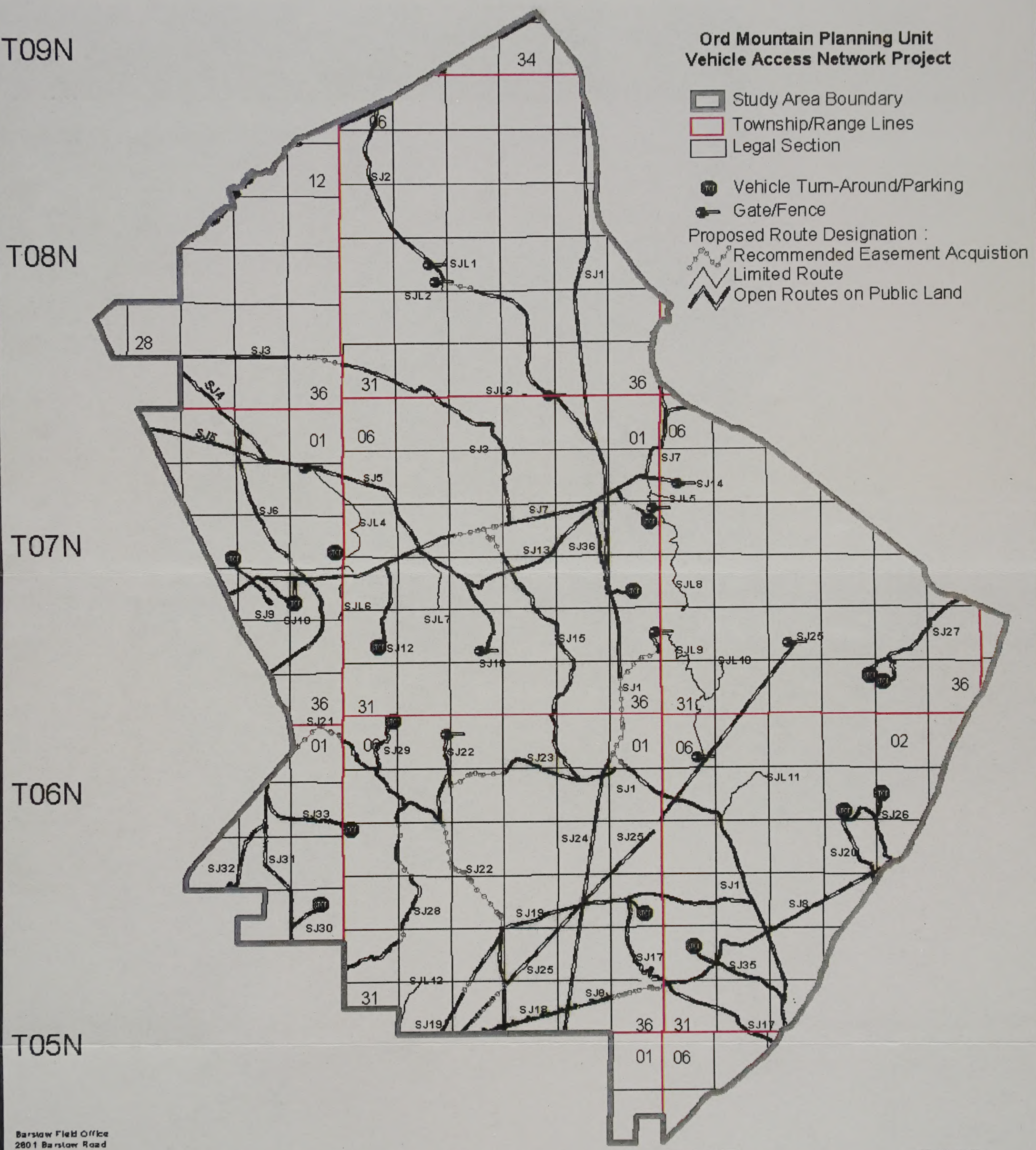
Map D
Proposed Ord Mountain Planning Unit
Rehabilitation Zones With Closed Routes



Barstow Field Office
2601 Barstow Road
Barstow, CA 92311
(760) 252-6000

The Ord Mountain Pilot Project is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Barstow, California in San Bernardino County. The total area within the project boundary is 124,988 acres (195.3 square miles). Of this area, 102,135 acres (159.6 square miles) are managed by the BLM, 21,972 acres (34.3 square miles) are privately owned, and 881 acres (1.4 square miles) are state lands.

Map E
Proposed Ord Mountain Planning Unit
Vehicle Route Network



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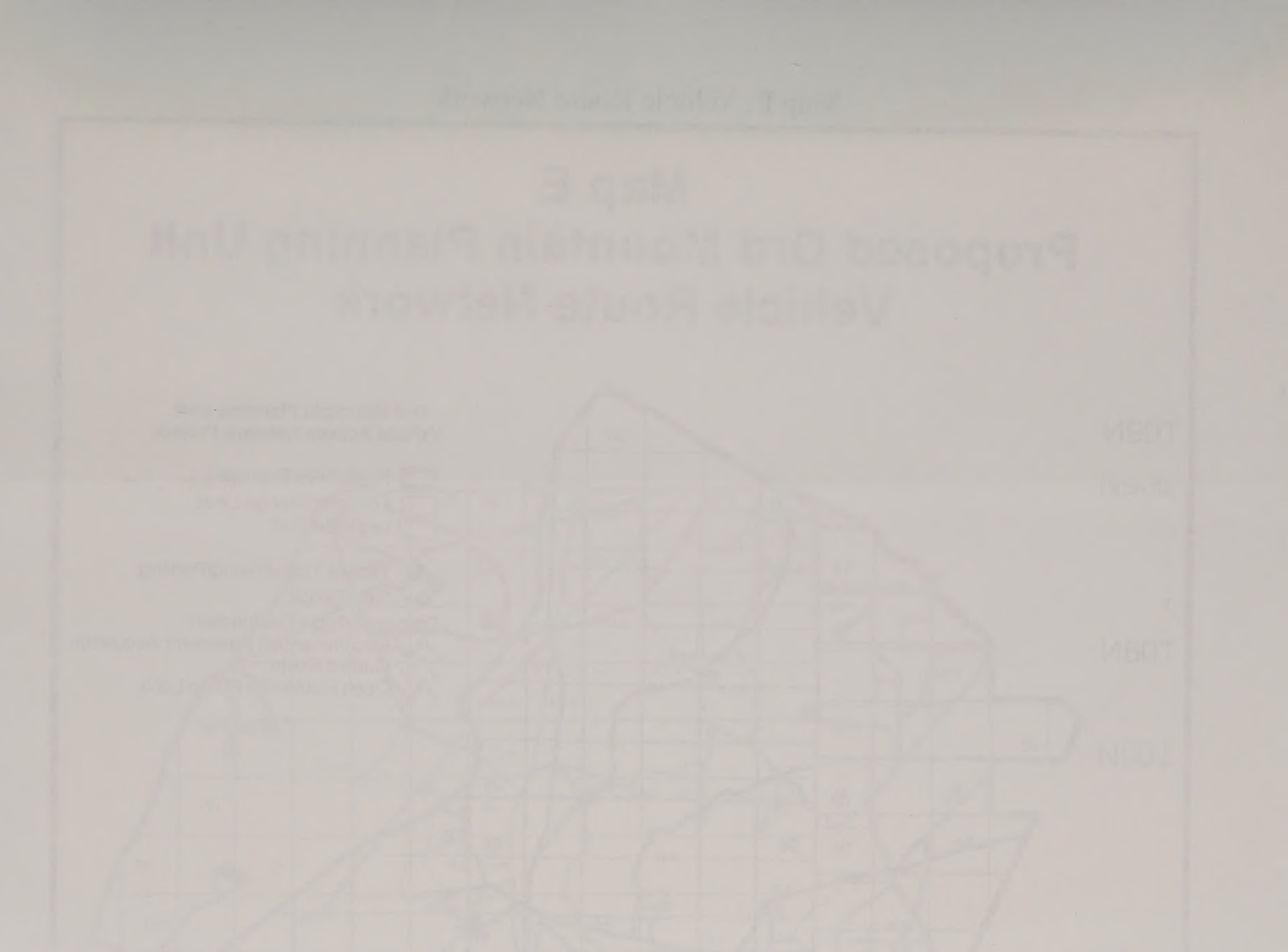
(760) 252-6000

The Ord Mountain Pilot Project is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Barstow, California in San Bernardino County. The total area within the project boundary is 124,988 acres (195.3 square miles). Of this area, 102,135 acres (159.6 square miles) are managed by the BLM, 21,972 acres (34.3 square miles) are privately owned, and 881 acres (1.4 square miles) are state lands.



APPENDIX I

WEST MOJAVE ROUTE DESIGNATION,
ORD MOUNTAIN PILOT UNIT,
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE SCREENING COMPONENTS

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
California Desert District

July 1997

West Mojave Route Designation
Ord Mountain Pilot Unit
Biological Resource Screening Components

WEST MOJAVE ROUTE DESIGNATION
ORD MOUNTAIN PILOT UNIT
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE SCREENING COMPONENTS

3 July 1997

California Desert District
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of the Interior

WEST MOJAVE ROUTE DESIGNATION
ORD MOUNTAIN PILOT UNIT
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE SCREENING COMPONENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document addresses the screening process used by the Bureau of Land Management to delineate, categorize and map significant biological resource components of a specific California Desert Conservation Area planning unit for the purposes of vehicle route designation. The Ord Mountain region of the West Mojave Desert was selected as the subject planning unit and the biological component mapping process described is intended for use in a pilot vehicle route designation program, potentially applicable to wider application in the forthcoming West Mojave Coordinated Management Plan. Desert tortoise emphasis zones, non-desert tortoise emphasis zones, desert bighorn sheep concentration areas, raptor (bird of prey) nesting/foraging habitats, bat habitat, desert spring/artificial water/wash habitats, and special status plants/unusual plant assemblages are identified as significant biological components of the subject planning area and are generally depicted on an accompanying Geographic Information System generated map set, together with a 1989 vehicle route inventory for the planning area. In addition, habitat quality of recommended desert tortoise emphasis zones is characterized as high, moderate or low in relation to these areas' potential habitat contribution to desert tortoise population recovery. Site specific information for identified significant biological components is detailed, including a brief literature review on habitat parameters, regional significance, existing policies/prior land use commitments and resource threats/impacts. Considerations and recommendations for route designation planning are also discussed.

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Appendix 1: Ord Mtn. Pilot Workgroup Report (7 pages).

Appendix 2: 1977-1997 Tortoise Transect Data (10 pages).

Appendix 3: 1977-1997 Tortoise Transect Map Set (seven 7.5 min. quadrangles). On file at the USDI Bureau of Land Management's Barstow Resource Area Office.

Appendix 4: Biological Resource Component Map Set (seven 7.5 min. quadrangles). On file at the USDI Bureau of Land Management's Barstow Resource Area Office.

WEST MOJAVE ROUTE DESIGNATION
ORD MOUNTAIN PILOT UNIT
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE SCREENING COMPONENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is currently engaged in completing a long-awaited route designation program for the West Mojave Desert portion of the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA), as specified in the CDCA Plan (BLM 1980a). The following document describes the screening process used to delineate, categorize and map significant biological resource components of the Ord Mountain planning unit for the purposes of vehicle route designation in a pilot program. Site specific information for identified biological components is also detailed, including habitat parameters, regional significance, existing policies/prior land use commitments, and resource threats/impacts. Additionally, considerations and recommendations for route designation planning are discussed.

Biological component significance for this pilot program was determined based on State/Federal analyses of wildlife species status, CDCA Plan prescriptions, planning area biological component importance and applicability for use in a wider, West Mojave Desert route designation program. Biological resource components identified include Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) Emphasis Zones (DTEZs), Non-Desert Tortoise Emphasis Zones (NDTEZs), raptor (bird of prey) nesting and foraging habitat, desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) seasonal concentration areas, desert spring/artificial water/wash habitats, special status plants and unusual plant assemblages. These components and a 100 percent inventory of vehicle routes existing as of 1989, are subsequently depicted on an accompanying 7.5 min. orthophoto quadrangle Geographic Information System (GIS) generated map set. In addition, tortoise habitat quality of identified DTEZs on the accompanying map set is characterized as low, moderate or high, in relation to these areas' potential habitat contribution to desert tortoise population recovery. Though not depicted on the accompanying map set, special status plant areas, bighorn sheep travel corridors and bat habitats within the planning area are also discussed in relation to route designation.

REGIONAL BACKGROUND

The CDCA Management Plan, completed with full public involvement in 1980, set the current framework for BLM management of public lands in Southern California. The goal of this plan is to "provide for the use of the public lands and resources of the CDCA ...in a manner which enhances wherever possible-and which does not diminish, on balance-the environmental, cultural, and aesthetic values of the Desert and its future productivity" (page 6; CDCA Plan; BLM, 1980a).

The desert tortoise and Mohave ground squirrel (*Spermophilus mohavensis*), recognized as keystone species of the West Mojave even at the time of CDCA plan preparation, were considered special status species (page 35; CDCA Plan; BLM 1980a) requiring the subsequent development of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and/or Habitat Management Plans (HMPs). A portion of the subject planning area was subsequently designated crucial tortoise habitat "essential to the continued existence of the species" (Map 4; CDCA Plan; BLM 1980a), and a HMP was prescribed. Similarly, the CDCA Plan required the development of HMPs for known bighorn sheep herds and the Newberry-Granite Mountain Raptor Breeding Area, both of which also occur within the planning area. However, bighorn were not known to occur within the subject planning area during CDCA Management Plan preparation and were discovered only following plan adoption.

Planned ACECs/HMPs were anticipated to be developed in the early 1980s and were required, within one to three years of CDCA Management Plan acceptance, to implement vehicle use control (route designation) as well as parking/camping restrictions, for the benefit of sensitive species like the desert tortoise, Mohave ground squirrel, bighorn sheep and raptors (page 33; CDCA Plan; BLM 1980a). Unfortunately, ACEC/HMP development for some of these species, as well as route designation, has not occurred.

On April 2, 1990, approximately ten years following CDCA Plan completion, the Mojave population of the desert tortoise was listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) as a threatened species, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (FWS 1990a). Soon thereafter, critical habitat for the Mojave population of the desert tortoise (59 Federal Register 5820) was also designated and a recovery plan finalized (Figure 1, FWS 1994).

Due to these latter developments and CDCA Management Plan direction to analyze and potentially alter multiple-use class designations when critical habitat for wildlife species is designated, as well as incorporate recovery plan goals (page 31; CDCA Plan; BLM 1980a), the BLM determined that a CDCA Plan Amendment was necessary in order to modify land use prescriptions and zoning to specifically address desert tortoise recovery within the CDCA. The BLM concurrently determined that a prudent course of action during the amendment preparation phase, was to address all sensitive biological resources, to analyze the current management situation (CMS) and to compare this CMS with CDCA objectives for resource protection and visitor use. Ideally, such a comparison would assist in identifying potential deficiencies in current land management zoning and use prescriptions, with a plan amendment serving as a planning vehicle to remedy identified deficiencies.

It was hoped that any plan amendment developed could be formatted in an ecosystem management manner, addressing resources across land-ownership borders (private, State and Federal) and provide some streamlining benefit to local, State and Federal jurisdictional planning and permitting. This plan amendment process has become a reality and is referred to as the West Mojave Coordinated Management Plan, with an anticipated completion date of late 1998. Key elements of this plan amendment include potential multiple-use class modification, adjustments to

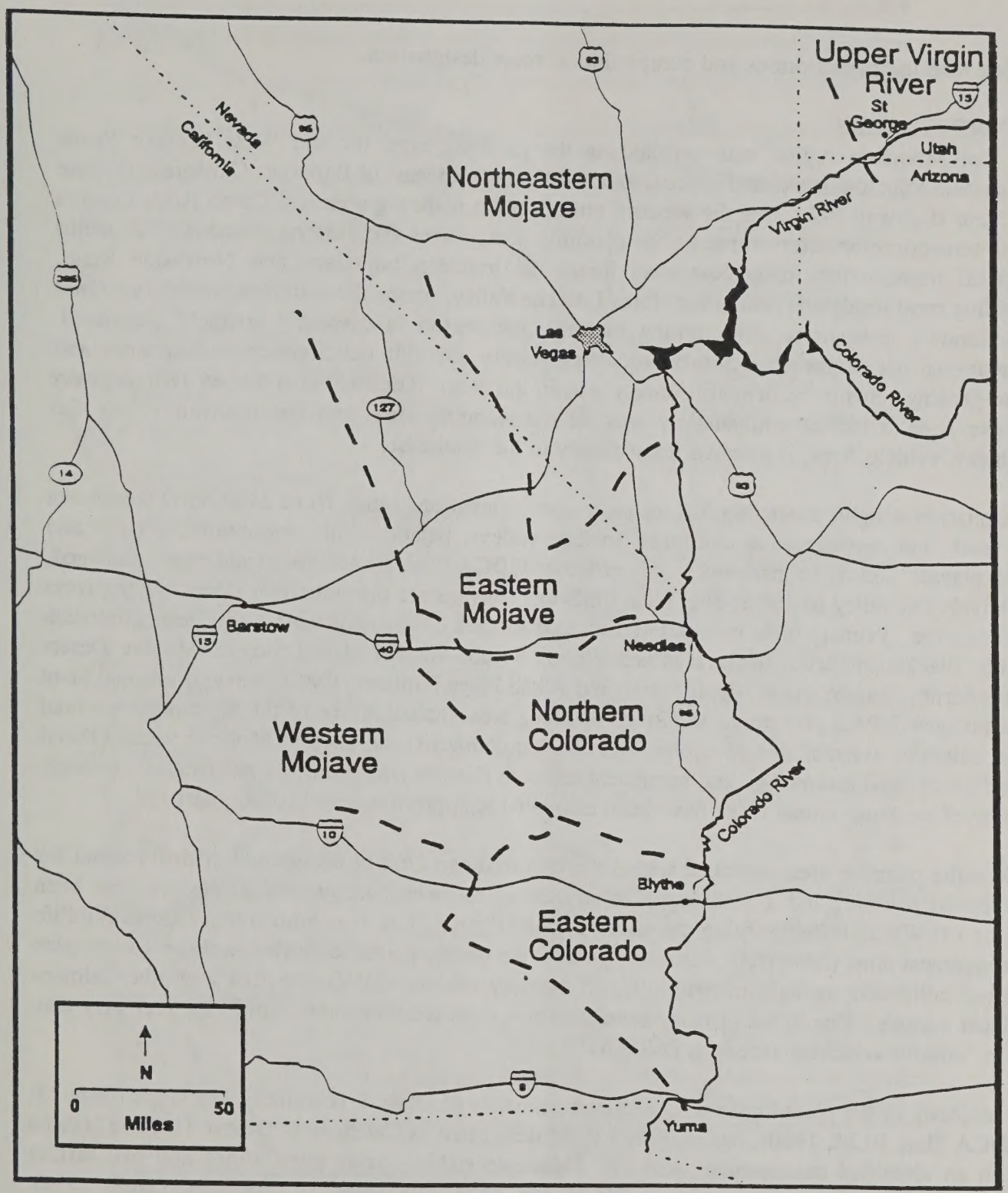


Figure 1: Regional map depicting approximate boundaries of desert tortoise recovery units in the Mojave region (FWS 1994).

existing land use prescriptions and completion of route designation.

PLANNING AREA

The Ord Mountain region was selected as the planning area for the West Mojave Route Designation Pilot and is situated approximately 20 miles southeast of Barstow, California (Figure 2). State Highway 247 forms the western border of the planning area and Camp Rock Road, a major transportation artery through the planning area, forms the eastern boundary. A major electrical transmission line/access road forms the northern boundary and Northside Road, providing rural residential access for North Lucerne Valley, forms the southern boundary. Once a moderately prosperous gold mining vicinity, the region is currently sparsely populated. Recreational use, communication broadcasting, utility corridor development/maintenance and cattle grazing remain the primary human uses in the area. The Stoddard Valley Off Highway Vehicle Area is located immediately west of the planning area, and the Johnson Valley Off Highway Vehicle Area, is situated immediately to the southeast.

Precipitation is light, averaging 4-6 inches a year. Elevations range from 2400-6309 feet above sea level, and representative landforms include valleys, bajadas, hills, mountains, washes and small playas. Soils are considered highly erodible (CDCA Plan, BLM 1980a) and easily damaged. Relatively flat valley basins, rolling hills, cliffs and canyons are present, with slope varying from 0-45 degrees. Primary plant communities include Mojave Creosote Bush Scrub, Desert Saltbush Scrub, Blackbush Scrub, Mojave Mixed Woody Scrub, Mojave Mixed Steppe, Mojave Desert Wash Scrub, Transmontane Alkali Marsh and Alkali Playa (Holland 1986). Several unusual plant assemblages (UPAs) also occur within the planning area, including one of the most northern (and frost tolerant) assemblages of jojoba (*Simmondsia chinensis*), an ancient Mohave yucca (*Yucca schidigera*) clone assemblage and an ancient creosote (*Larrea tridentata*) clonal ring assemblage. A few of the latter clonal rings have been estimated at approximately 11,000 years old.

The entire planning area is located within the Ord-Rodman Unit of designated critical habitat for the desert tortoise, and a recovery plan addressing tortoise management in the area has been written (FWS 1994) identifying the entire region (Figure 3) as a recommended Desert Wildlife Management Area (DWMA). Tortoise threats in the planning area identified in this recovery plan include collection, vandalism, road kills, off highway vehicle (OHV) activities and other human-related impacts. One of the primary management actions recommended within the recovery plan is to "control vehicular access in DWMAs".

A majority of the planning area, comprised primarily of Class L (Limited Use) lands (page 13; CDCA Plan; BLM, 1980), has also been BLM designated as Category II Desert Tortoise Habitat with an identified management goal of: "Maintain stable, viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise habitat values" (BLM and California Dept. of Fish and Game 1992). Currently, the BLM's goal for Class L lands is to provide a reasonable network of access, with vehicle travel limited to approved, marked routes of travel which avoid or minimize damage or degradation of the natural, cultural and aesthetic values of the desert (page 13, 87-92; CDCA Plan; BLM 1980). Following authorization of a controversial 1996 OHV event in the subject planning

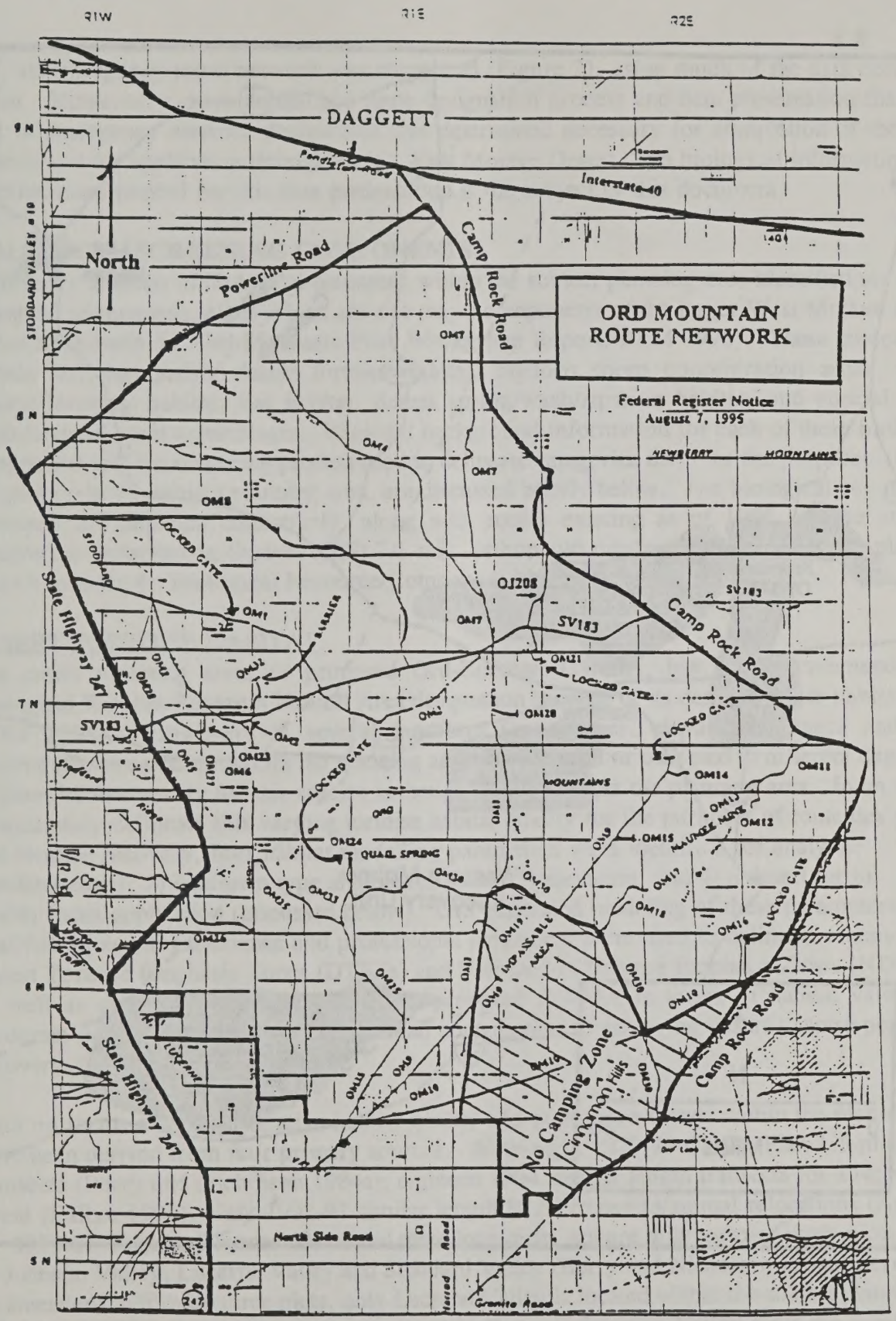


Figure 2: 1996 BLM Emergency Route Network. The emergency Ord Mountain Route Network Map published by the BLM in the August 7, 1995 Federal Register is depicted above. (5)

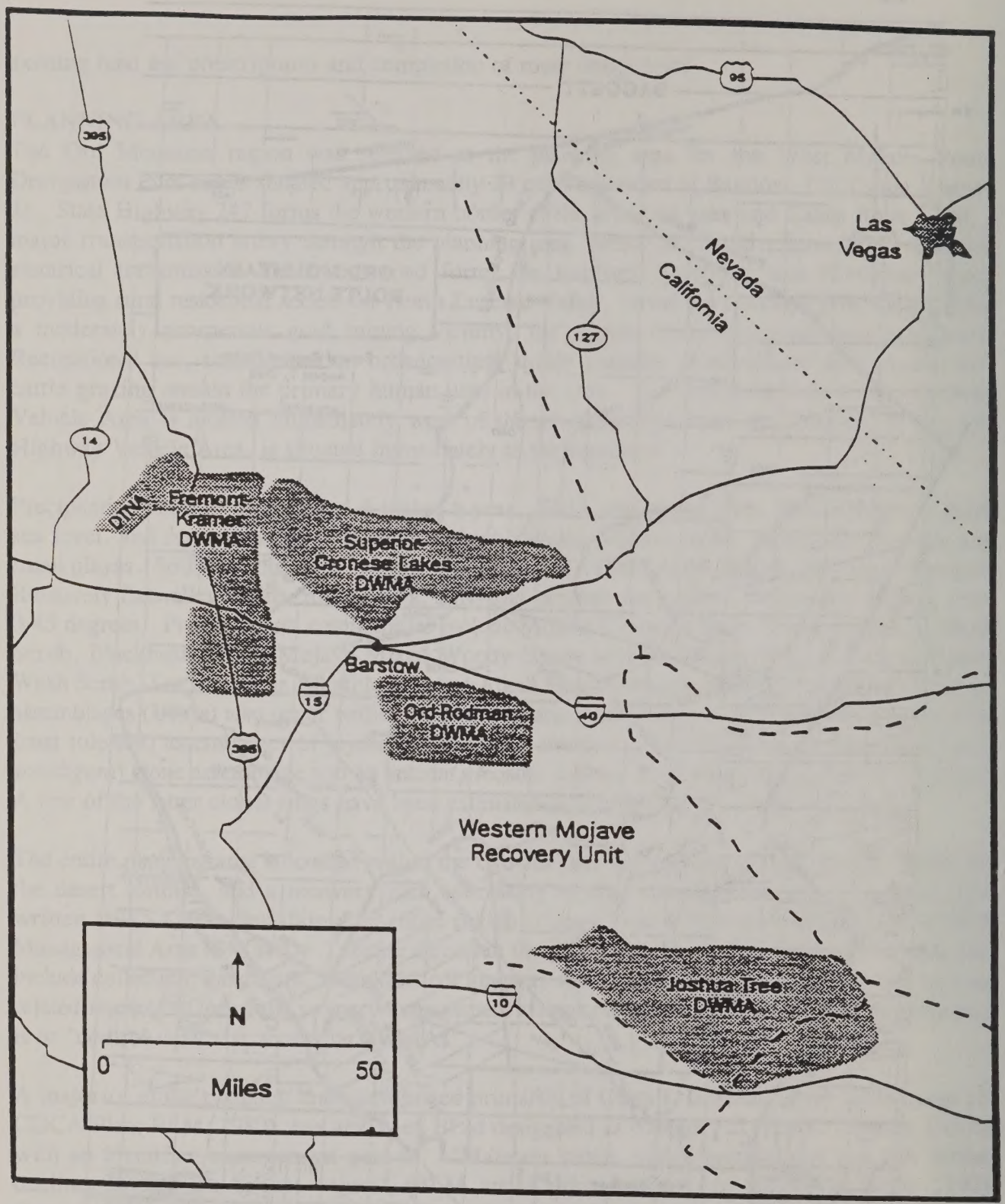


Figure 3: Proposed Desert Wildlife Management Areas (DWMAs) in the western Mojave recovery unit (FWS 1994).

(6)

area, an emergency route network was completed (Figure 2), using much of the data compiled herein. However, a more formalized route designation process and data presentation than that used in emergency network designation was determined necessary for completion of the final network and for application throughout the West Mojave Desert. The biological information and considerations needed for this data presentation is the subject of this document.

BIOLOGICAL SCREENING COMPONENTS

Preliminary analysis of biological resources within the subject planning area identified six major biological components, all of which are also major components of the larger West Mojave Desert region (Appendix 1: Ord Mountain Pilot Workgroup Report; BLM 1995). These components include varying quality desert tortoise habitat, bighorn sheep concentration areas, raptor nesting/foraging habitat, bat habitat, desert spring/wash/riparian habitat, and special status plants/unusual plant assemblages. Regional background information for each of these biological components and the screening process used to delineate/categorize them for the purposes of route designation in the subject planning area, are discussed briefly below. The biological components discussed are depicted collectively, along with routes existing as of 1996, on the attached Geographic Information System (GIS) 7.5 min. orthophoto quadrangle map set of the planning area (Appendix 4: Biological Resource Component Map Set).

DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT

The entire planning area, or proposed Ord-Rodman DWMA, has been recommended for Ecological Reserve/Research Natural Area designation because of its desert tortoise habitat value (FWS 1994). However, as several landform types/slopes, elevational ranges and plant communities are present within the planning area and are used or occupied to different degrees by tortoise, habitat quality for this species is thought to vary across the planning area. In an attempt to accurately delineate this varying tortoise habitat quality for the purposes of route designation and tortoise recovery, four habitat modelling parameters were identified for analysis: 1) desert tortoise density; 2) landform type and degree slope; 3) elevation; and 4) a desert tortoise habitat quality index application (discussed below). GIS generated modeling of these parameters, local, qualified biologist experience and professional judgement were used to delineate recommended Desert Tortoise Emphasis Zones (DTEZs) and Non-Desert Tortoise Emphasis Zones (NDTEZs), as well as categorize DTEZs within this proposed DWMA in terms of habitat value (low, moderate or high) relative to their potential contribution to achieving desert tortoise population recovery.

Data on tortoise density, relative habitat quality and population trends within the planning area have been derived from four primary sources: thirty-eight 1977-79 CDCA Plan 1.5-mile length transects (Berry and Nicholson 1984a); eighteen 1994 similar length transects for a recreational event (LaRue 1994), eight 1992-97 similar length BLM transects/animal relocations (Appendix 2: 1977-97 Tortoise Transect Data) and three long-term, square mile tortoise study plots located in Johnson Valley, Lucerne Valley and Stoddard Valley (Berry and Nicholson 1984a; Berry 1990, as amended). Of these three plots, only Lucerne Valley is located within the subject planning area (south-central portion), though the Stoddard Valley and Johnson Valley plots are located only

slightly outside the planning area, to the west and southeast respectively (Appendix 3: 1977-97 Tortoise Transect Map Set).

Current tortoise density within the planning area has been estimated to range between 5-150 animals per square mile (FWS 1994), with a patchy distribution of the higher density population segments. In general, four primary regions within the planning area have been identified as high tortoise use areas: West Stoddard Valley; North Lucerne Valley; Northwest Johnson Valley; and the Daggett Ridge/Wash to North Camp Rock Road vicinity (Appendices 2 and 3). In 1990, tortoise density at the Lucerne Valley study plot was estimated at 82 animals per square mile, a decline of 53% from 1980. At Johnson Valley, tortoise density in 1990 was estimated at 18 animals per square mile, a decline of 83% from 1980. In 1991, tortoise density at the Stoddard Valley plot was estimated at 125 animals per square mile, up from 96 in 1980. Densities over the majority of the subject planning area are considered generally much lower than at these plots (FWS 1994) and were probably considerably higher between the 1930s and 1950s (Berry 1984a).

For the purposes of this analysis, estimated 1980 tortoise density classes within the planning area have been characterized as low (0-20 tortoises per square mile), moderate (20-50 tortoises per square mile) and high (50+ tortoises per square mile) density zones. Figure 4 depicts the resulting map of estimated 1980 tortoise density. Areas above 4000 feet in elevation or with a slope of greater than 30 degrees, were omitted from this density classification (after Berry and Nicholson 1984a).

Tortoise population declines within the planning area appear to be due to several factors, including human-related activities (including collection, vandalism, roadkills, OHV activities, livestock grazing and mining), an upper respiratory tract disease and raven predation (Berry 1984b, 1992; Brown *et al.* 1992; FWS 1994). Tortoise populations are often depleted adjacent to roads when average daily traffic is greater than 180 vehicles (Nicholson 1978a, 1978b), and juvenile tortoise numbers on long-term study plots have been documented to be significantly lower adjacent to well-used dirt/paved roads (Berry and Turner 1984). Significant depletion of tortoise populations adjacent to highways has been fairly well documented (Boarman et al. 1992, Karl 1989, LaRue 1992), but even dirt roads with low vehicle use can contribute to depressions in local tortoise densities (Berry *et al.* 1986a; 1986b).

A variety of plant communities, landforms, slopes and elevational areas are utilized to differing degrees by tortoise within the planning area. Plant communities observed to support higher tortoise use include Mojave Creosote Bush Scrub, Mojave Mixed Woody Scrub, Mojave Mixed Steppe and Mojave Desert Wash Scrub. Tortoise use of these communities can vary seasonally, as well as in type and degree of use (i.e., burrowing, foraging or social/reproductive activities), with desert wash communities frequently correlated (Jennings 1992, 1993) with high levels of foraging use. Lower levels of tortoise use have been observed in the limited amount of Desert Saltbush Scrub and Blackbush Scrub within the planning area, though the former community is regionally significant for tortoise elsewhere in the Mojave Desert (e.g. Fremont-Kramer, Superior-Cronese Critical Habitat Units). Very little tortoise use has been observed in Transmontane Alkali

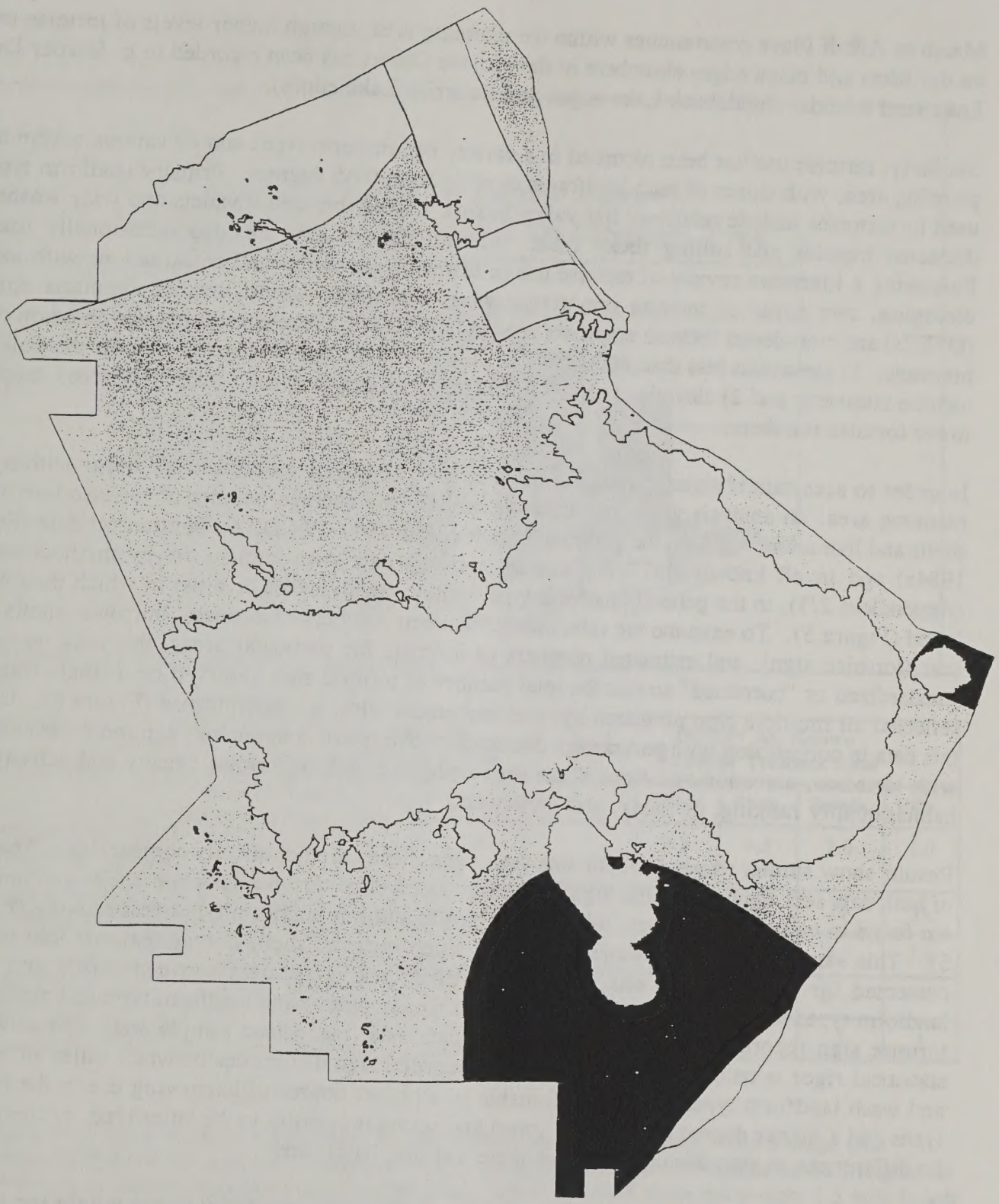


Figure 4: 1980 Estimated Tortoise Density. The estimated number of desert tortoises per square mile within the Ord Mountain Route Designation Pilot Area in 1980, with slopes of greater than 30 degrees and elevations of greater than 4000 feet (depicted in white) omitted from density classification (modified from Berry 1984a). The 0-20 tortoises/square mile density class is depicted in blue; the 20-50 density class is depicted in green; and the 50-100, 100-250, and 250+ density classes depicted in yellow.

(9)

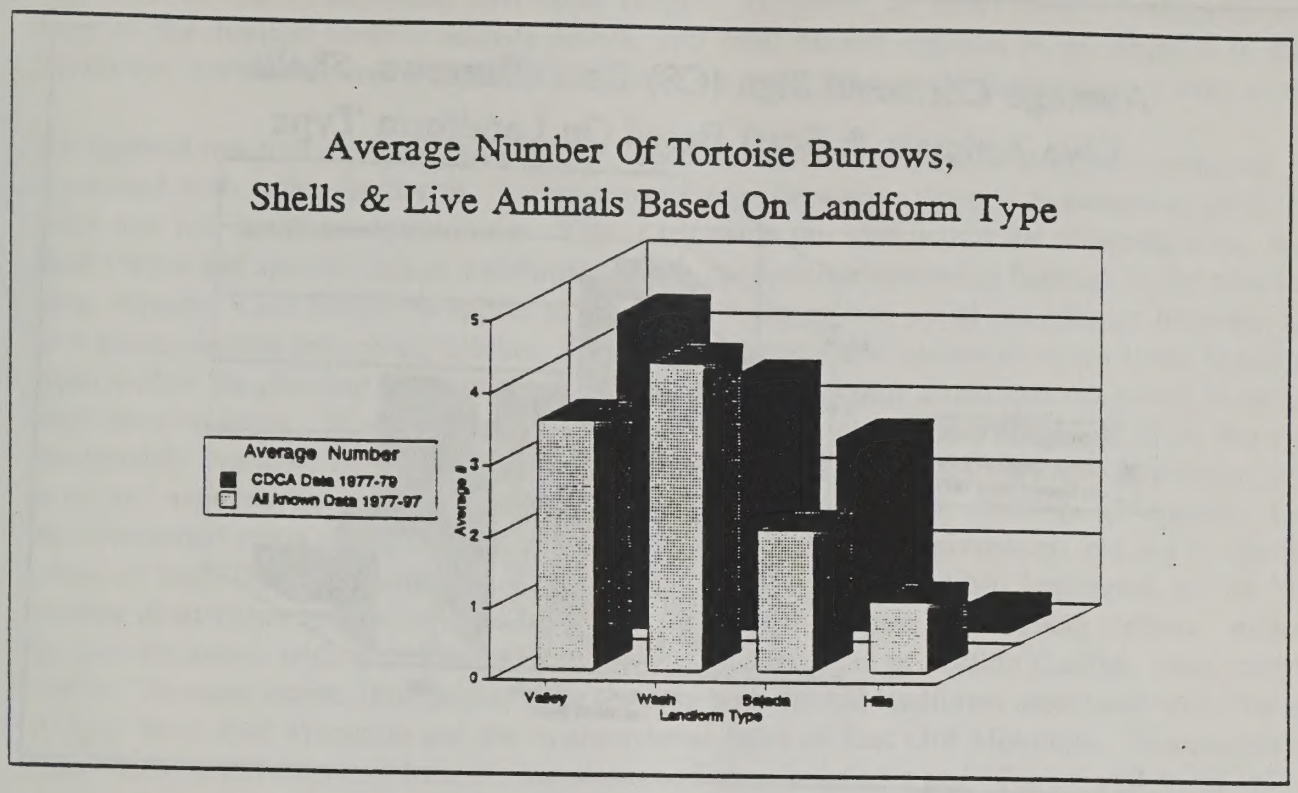
Marsh or Alkali Playa communities within the planning area, though higher levels of tortoise use on dry lakes and playa edges elsewhere in the Mojave Desert has been recorded (e.g. Harper Dry Lake sand islands, Cuddeback Lake edges and Superior Lake edges).

Similarly, tortoise use has been recorded in a variety of landform types and elevations within the planning area, with slopes of such landforms ranging from 0-45 degrees. Primary landform types used by tortoises include relatively flat valley basins, narrow braided washlets and wide washes, dissected bajadas and rolling rocky hills. Mountainous slopes are also occasionally used. Following a literature review of tortoise use in differing elevations and consultations with local biologists, two zones of tortoise importance were identified: desert tortoise emphasis zones (DTEZs) and non-desert tortoise emphasis zones (NDTEZs). These zonations were based on two premises: 1) elevations less than 4000 feet and slopes of less than 30 degrees support the bulk of tortoise numbers; and 2) elevations above 4000 feet or slopes of greater than 30 degrees support lower tortoise numbers.

In order to ascertain if significant differences in tortoise use by landform type occur within the planning area, an analysis was conducted to compare the average number of tortoise burrows, shells and live animals within the planning area found in 1977-79 CDCA Plan transect data (Berry 1984a) and in all known (1977-97) tortoise transect data with similar survey methodologies (Appendices 2/3), to the general landform type (valley, wash, bajada or hills) in which they were found (Figure 5). To examine the relationship between numbers of tortoises, burrows, shells and scat (tortoise sign), and estimated numbers of animals for particular areas, this data was also standardized or "corrected" so that the total number of tortoise sign observed on a single transect reflected all multiple sign produced by, and associated with, a single tortoise (Figure 6). Using this data in conjunction with parameters discussed above (plant communities commonly associated with tortoises, elevation and slope areas supporting the bulk of tortoise density and activity), a habitat quality ranking, or index, was generated.

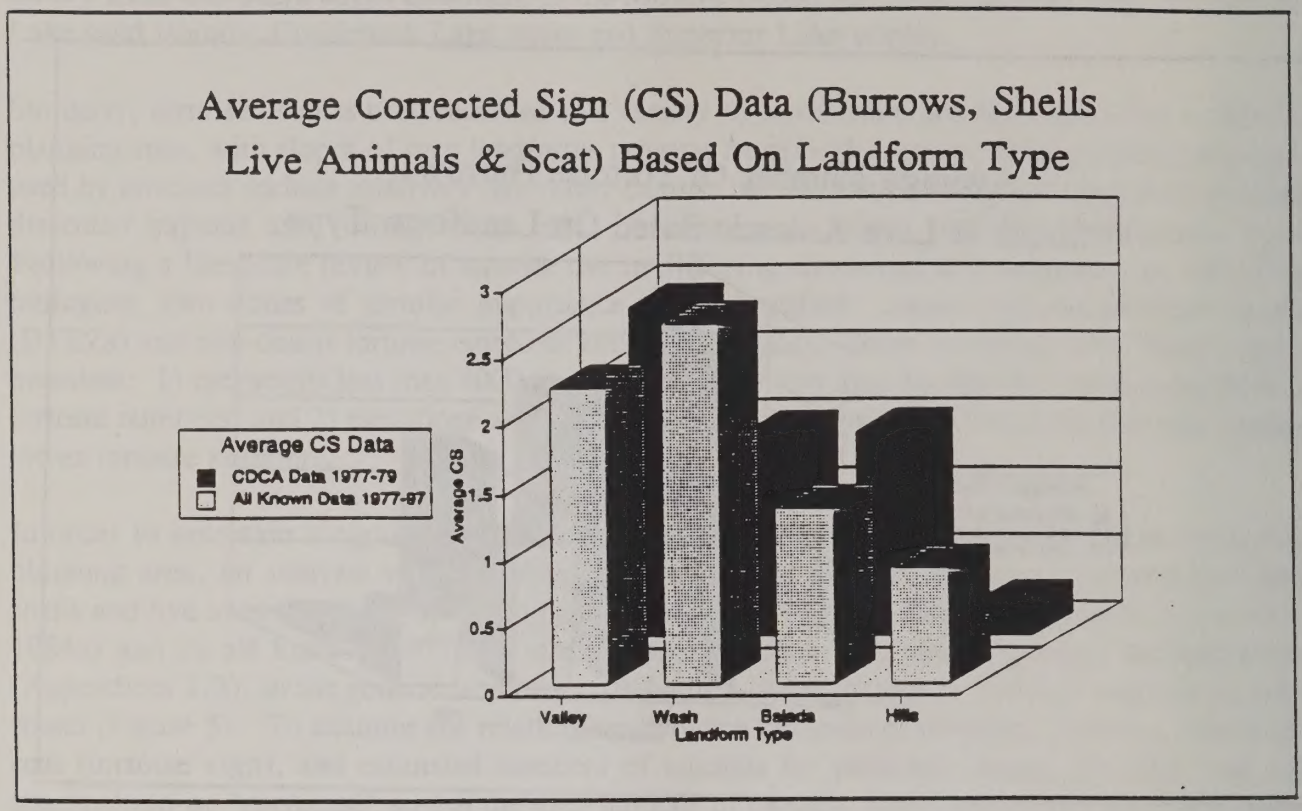
Results show similar trends for both data sets, even if they are not directly comparable. Analysis of both data sets suggest that the highest average number of tortoise burrows, shells and animals are found in valleys and washes, followed by bajada and hill landform types respectively (Figure 5). This same trend is also largely reflected when burrow, shell, live animal and scat data is corrected for the same data sets, although no difference is apparent between bajada and wash landform types with the 1977-79 data set (Figure 6). In comparing landform type and amount of tortoise sign recorded on transects with both data sets, inadequate sample sizes and a lack of statistical rigor is recognized. Furthermore, recorded sign differences between valley or bajada and wash landform types may be attributable to a higher degree of burrowing use in the former types and a higher degree of foraging, travel and social movement in the latter type, or there may be differences in sign decomposition in these varying landforms.

Nonetheless, it appears from this cursory analysis, that tortoise activity levels within the subject planning area, as implied by tortoise sign, are highest in valleys and washes, followed by bajada and hill landforms. No single landform provides all habitat necessary for tortoise population growth. All four are important facets of habitat available for tortoise use, and individual tortoises



	1977-79 CDCA Plan Tortoise Transect Data					1977-97 All Known Tortoise Transect Data			
	Valley	**Wash**	**Bajada**	**Hills**		**Valley**	**Wash**	**Bajada**	**Hills**
Average # of burrows, shells & live animals	4.4	3.5	2.7	0.3		3.5	4.3	2.0	1.0
Number of Samples (N)	11	2	21	4		15	6	29	14
Standard Deviation (S)	5.0	3.6	3.9	0.5		4.5	2.6	3.5	1.9
Range (R)	0-17	1-6	0-14	0-1		0-17	1-8	0-14	0-7
Habitat Quality Rank	1	2	3	4		2	1	3	4

Figure 5: Tortoise Habitat Quality Index-Burrows, Shells and Live Animals. The average total number of desert tortoise burrows, shells and live animals within the Ord Mountain Route Designation Pilot Area, according to landform type (valley, wash, bajada and hill), from thirty-eight 1.5 mile length transects associated with 1977-79 CDCA Management Plan data (Berry and Nicholson 1984a) and all known (1977-97) tortoise transect data with similar survey methodologies (sixty-four 1.5 mile length transects), with assigned habitat quality ranking (refer to text).



	1977-79 CDCA Plan Tortoise Transect Data					1977-97 All Known Tortoise Transect Data			
	Valley	Wash	Bajada	Hills		Valley	Wash	Bajada	Hills
Average CS	2.5	1.5	1.5	0.3		2.2	2.7	1.3	0.9
Number of Samples (N)	11	2	21	4		15	6	29	14
Standard Deviation (S)	1.9	0.7	1.7	0.5		1.7	1.5	1.5	1.0
Range (R)	0-6	1-2	0-7	0-1		0-6	1-5	0-7	0-3
Habitat Quality Rank	1	2	2	3		2	1	3	4

Figure 6: Tortoise Habitat Quality Index-Corrected Tortoise Sign. The average corrected desert tortoise sign (i.e., adjusted total number of tortoise burrows, shells, live animals and scat observed on a single transect so that multiple sign produced by a single tortoise is reduced to one sign-Berry and Nicholson 1984a) within the Ord Mountain Route Designation Pilot Area, according to landform type (valley, wash, bajada and hill), from thirty-eight 1.5 mile length transects associated with 1977-79 CDCA Management Plan preparation data; and all known (1977-97) tortoise transect data with similar survey methodologies (sixty-four 1.5 mile length transects), with assigned habitat quality ranking (refer to text).

may involve one or all within their home ranges. However, as valleys and washes appear to support the highest tortoise activity levels, and road density appears to be highest in such landforms, particular emphasis should be placed on appropriate route designation in such areas.

Throughout much of the West Mojave, many specific bajadas known to have high tortoise use are associated with valley landforms. Tortoise interchange between valleys is suspected to occur via wash and hill landform connections. This is probably the case within the planning area, also. Both valley and specific bajada landforms are critical tortoise burrowing habitats in the planning area, whereas wash landforms appear to be critical foraging and social interchange habitats, and to a lesser degree burrowing habitat. Tortoise reproduction is known to occur in all landform types within the planning area, with specific bajada and all valley landforms suspected to be key reproduction areas. Wash landforms, particularly during low rainfall years, are often the only predictably available tortoise forage areas. Hill landforms, due to the inherent protection often provided reptiles by rocky hillslopes, may provide refugium for tortoises in specific high environmental stress situations (i.e., adverse weather, disturbance, predation) and are frequently areas of high tortoise hibernation use. In fact, many undeveloped hill landforms within high surface disturbance tortoise habitats have been reported to support high density tortoise enclaves in specific areas, with such habitat likely providing maximum protection (LaRue, pers. comm. 1997). To some extent, this appears to be the case with the hill landforms associated with Daggett Ridge, West Ord Mountain and the east/northeast faces of East Ord Mountain. Consequently, route designation should address the importance of specific bajadas and hills, as well as all valleys and washes, in relation to long-term tortoise population protection.

Due to the very small, disjunct nature of the planning area in relation to habitat areas supporting the majority of the West Mojave tortoise population, minimization of impacts and potential threats to remaining segments of valley landform habitat, specific bajada/hill landform habitat and all wash landform habitat within the planning area, is critical for tortoise recovery within this recommended DWMA. Historically, Stoddard, Lucerne and Johnson Valleys, which surround the planning area, are reported to have supported large tortoise populations (Berry 1984b). However, only small segments of these valleys remain viable as effective tortoise reserve areas, due to existing rural development, highway/road use and OHV use area designation. Similarly, many washes within the planning area have been or are currently subjected to high levels of use, particularly those forming travel corridors between the aforementioned valleys. Effective route designation of these landform types within the planning area provides an effective means of accomplishing tortoise recovery objectives.

In relation to OHV activities, it has been suggested that such recreational use is one of the most destructive, widespread and best documented threats to the survival of desert tortoises and other vertebrates, and to the integrity of their habitats (Adams *et al.* 1982a and b, Berry and Nicholson 1984b, Brattstrom and Bondello 1983, Bury 1987, Bury *et al.* 1977, Shargo 1983, Vollmer *et al.* 1976, Webb and Wilshire 1983). However, the negative effects of OHV activity on ecosystem elements are difficult to identify and even more difficult to quantify. Recorded OHV activity-related tortoise impacts include: animal mortality above and below ground; collapse of tortoise

burrows; damage or destruction of plants used for food, water and thermoregulation; plant community mosaic damage; adverse effects to animal well-being through water balance, thermoregulation and energy requirements; noise pollution; soil crust damage and soil erosion; weed proliferation; and increases in the number and frequency of fires (FWS 1994). Tortoise density and health have also been shown to deteriorate as a result of OHV activities when contrasted to appropriate control areas (Bury 1987).

But placed in perspective, some of these reported OHV activity-related effects are due to lawful and unlawful human activities which occur as a consequence of the access provided by the route network, with effects differing by type of route, compliance with route designation, nature and degree of human use, as well as tortoise and other special status species' habitat value, and species density (Appendix 1). Appropriate route designation can only address unlawful activities minimally, mainly by providing suitable law enforcement access, limiting the amount of patrol area and eliminating access to areas of high levels of unlawful activity. Direct tortoise impacts associated with legal OHV activity on appropriately designated routes (i.e., unintentionally harassing tortoises via vehicle noise or human contact avoidance, collapsing burrows on route edges or crushing animals crossing such routes, likely occur with very low frequency. Conversely, these direct impacts, and the indirect impacts of: crushing plants (Vollmer *et al.* 1976); disturbing soil via compaction and erosion (Lathrop 1983a, Webb *et al.* 1983); eliminating or degrading tortoise food (Avery 1992, Esque 1994, Tracy 1992); reducing tortoise cover (Avery *et al.* 1992); and altering movements or social patterns (Boarman *et al.* 1992, Stewart 1991), are magnified considerably if route proliferation is allowed to proceed unplanned, route designation is done inappropriately or if compliance with appropriate route designation is lacking. Executive orders (Nixon 1972, Carter 1977) require public land closure/remediation if adverse OHV effects to soils, vegetation, wildlife or wildlife habitat occur.

To accomplish desert tortoise recovery within this recommended DWMA, all efforts should be made to protect the most productive, highest quality tortoise habitats and ensure adequate impact-minimized linkages between such areas. With this in consideration for route designation planning, tortoise habitat quality in recommended DTEZs was further characterized as high, moderate or low based on tortoise density, plant community, landform, elevation and slope factors discussed above. This Tortoise Habitat Quality Index was applied, via mapping and professional judgement, in relation to specific areas' potential contribution to tortoise recovery (Figure 7).

BIGHORN SHEEP CONCENTRATION AREAS

One of the smallest desert bighorn herds of the California Desert, the Newberry-Rodman herd of approximately 25-50 animals (Andrew Pauli, California Dept. of Fish and Game, pers. comm.), is known to periodically use portions of the planning area, specifically East Ord Mountain, West Ord Mountain, Ord Mountain, Daggett Ridge and Stoddard Ridge (Barstow Resource Area, BLM office files). The California Dept. of Fish and Game (CDFG), has developed a metapopulation identification and naming convention, which the BLM has adopted. This convention identifies the Ord Mountains as an extirpated population range containing approximately 19,000 acres of suitable habitat (excluding movement corridors), and the adjacent Newberry-Rodman Mountains,

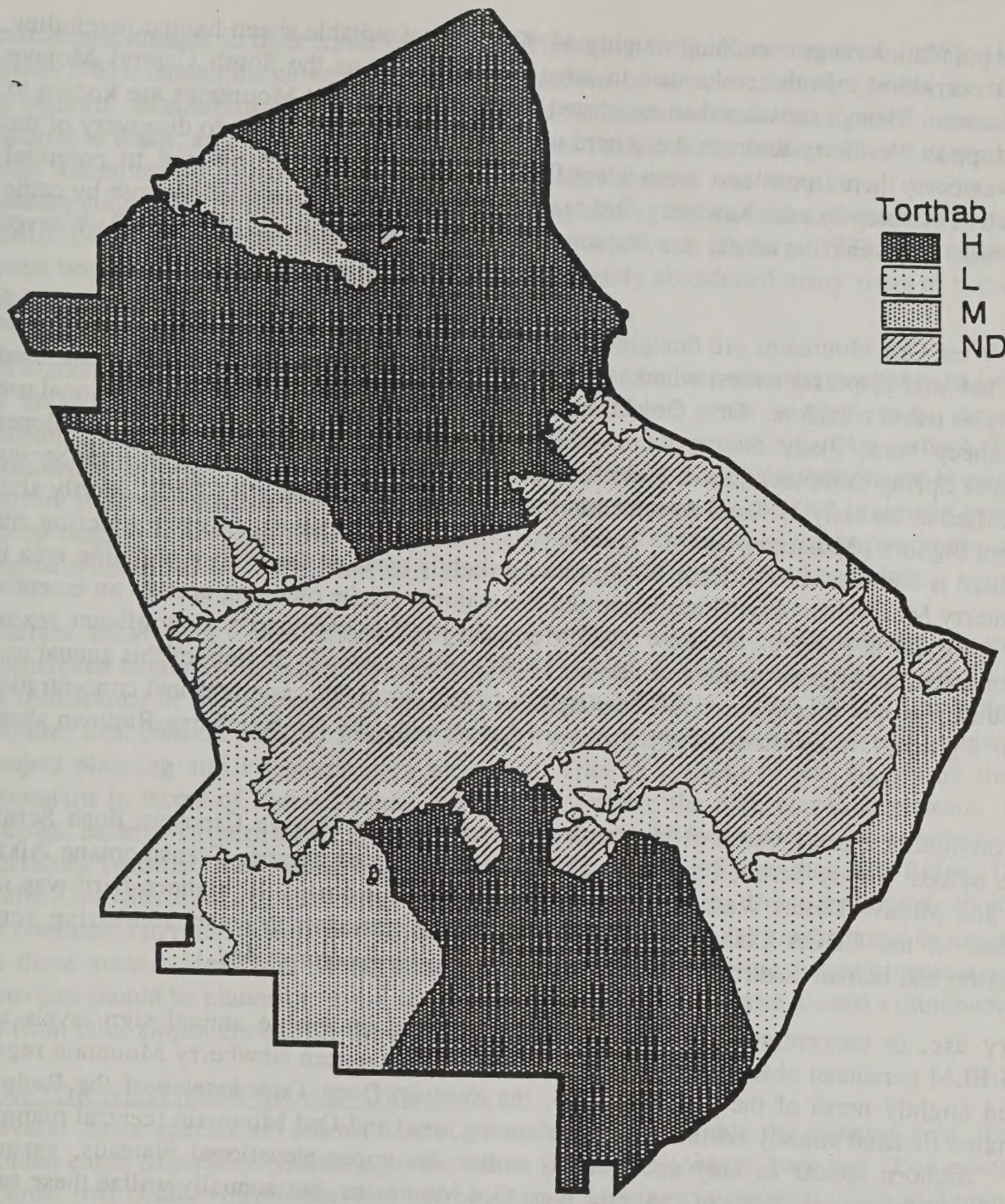


Figure 7: 1997 Tortoise Habitat Quality Index Application Map. Recommended desert tortoise emphasis zones (DTEZs) and non-desert tortoise emphasis zones (ND) within the Ord Mountain Route Designation Pilot Area. Tortoise habitat (Torthab) quality within these recommended zones is further characterized as high (H), moderate (M) or low (L). Recommended DTEZs and characterized habitat quality are based on elevation, landform type, degree slope and tortoise density attributes in considered relation to specific areas' potential habitat contribution to tortoise population recovery.

as a native population range containing roughly 44,000 acres of suitable sheep habitat (excluding movement corridors). Both are located in what is referred to as the South Central Mojave Metapopulation. Though considered an extirpated sheep range, the Ord Mountains are known to currently support Newberry-Rodman sheep herd use to varying degrees. Prior to discovery of the current Newberry herd, problems were identified by CDFG and BLM, related to potential reintroduction of sheep into the Newberry-Ord region. These problems included overuse by cattle in some areas, easy vehicular access to water sources and excessive OHV use (BLM 1973; Weaver 1973).

East and West Ord Mountains are thought to be used in an unpredictable fashion, primarily as transient use and dispersal zones, whereas Daggett/Stoddard Ridges are suspected to be used irregularly as travel corridors. Only Ord Mountain itself, appears to receive regular, seasonal use by this sheep herd, likely due to the abundance of spring water on the mountain slopes (Sweetwater Spring Complex, Coyote Hole Spring, Willow Spring, etc.). In fact, Willow Spring was identified in the early 1980s as the core watering area for this herd by the CDFG, shortly after the current bighorn population was first discovered. However, the current primary watering site for this herd is considered to be Kane Wash, located slightly north of the subject planning area in the Newberry Mountains. CDFG has identified the majority of the planning area as an essential bighorn transient use and travel zone. Ord Mountain itself is considered a significant sexual segregation area for bighorn rams (Vern Bleich, CDFG, pers. comm.). In light of this annual use, Ord Mountain proper is considered for the purposes of this discussion, as a seasonal concentration zone, or a portion of permanent sheep range used seasonally, by the Newberry-Rodman sheep herd.

Plant community types present within these use areas include Mojave Creosote Bush Scrub, Mojave Mixed Woody Scrub, Blackbush Scrub, Mojave Mixed Steppe, Transmontane Alkali Marsh and Mojave Desert Wash Scrub. Management of this particular bighorn herd was not addressed in the CDCA Plan, although a herd habitat management plan addressing route designation and human disturbance factors was subsequently recommended.

Primary use, or concentration, areas for this herd, based on visible animal sign levels and CDFG/BLM personnel observations, appear to be the northwestern Newberry Mountain region (located slightly north of the planning area), the Surprise/Deep Tank locales of the Rodman Mountains (located slightly northeast of the planning area) and Ord Mountain (central planning area). Bighorn appear to only occasionally utilize the upper elevational plateaus, springs, eastern/northern aspect slopes of East and West Ord Mountains, but annually utilize these same sites for extended time periods on Ord Mountain. Bighorn travel between these sites and regions, across the planning area, has been documented to occur on an irregular basis (Barstow Resource Area, BLM office files). In most cases this travel occurs within or adjacent to mountainous or high hill areas containing bighorn escape terrain or talus slopes, but travel within washes, across the alluvial fan between Daggett and Stoddard Ridges, has also been recorded.

Bighorn appear to be capable of accommodating a low number of lightly used routes and dispersed

recreational impacts in their travel movements (Hamilton 1982, Hamilton *et al.*, 1982, Holl and Bleich 1983), though the closer the approach by humans or vehicles, the more severe the response by bighorn. MacArthur *et al.* (1979) reported that bighorn ewe heart rates varied inversely with distance to roads, and in response to increased stress (indicated by increased heart rate), bighorn ewes attempted to avoid roads. Bighorn will alter degree and duration of use at specific concentration areas (bedding areas, waters, lambing sites, high elevation plateaus) if harassment (Geist 1975a), human activity (Jorgenson 1988) or OHV use (Deforge 1972, Jorgensen 1974) levels become too high. In fact, bighorn have completely abandoned many areas of historic use after human disturbance (Douglas 1976, Horesji 1976).

As bighorn travel movements through the majority of the planning area are thought to be irregular, of short duration and occurring primarily in mountainous areas lacking roads, the current screening effort identified only a portion of the Ord Mountain proper area (Appendix 4, Bighorn Concentration Area, Ord Mountain quadrangle) as a primary biological component in relation to current route designation efforts. The elevational line chosen for the Ord Mountain permanent sheep range was selected based on habitat quality factors of perennial water proximity, suitable ungulate forage, sheep escape terrain and access to suitable sheep travel corridors.

Current BLM policy also directs all planning efforts to address management of presently unoccupied mountainous habitat and nontraditional habitat between occupied mountainous habitat as transitional or movement areas (Boyd 1995; CDD IM 95-21, BLM 1994). This policy also requires total consideration by Bureau staff for proper metapopulation habitat management in all project planning and implementation activities. Though considered less significant than Ord Mountain in terms of spring density and existing routes; the high elevation plateaus, limited springs, eastern/northern aspect slopes of East and West Ord Mountains; as well as potential travel corridors (washes, mountains, hills) associated with Daggett Ridge-Stoddard Ridge, Daggett Ridge-Ord Mountain and East Ord Mountain-Rodman Mountains directional travel; should also be considered in route designation planning. Major developments and roads should be discouraged in these areas. However, should construction, maintenance or use become necessary, these activities should be planned to avoid spring and summer periods, and be located a minimum of 400 m from talus slopes commonly used by bighorn (King 1985).

RAPTOR NESTING/FORAGING HABITATS

Several raptor species are known to nest, forage and winter within the planning area, including golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), barn owl (*Tyto alba*), great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*) and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*). The aforementioned species are all considered resident species within the planning area, though northern region golden eeagles and prairie falcons may also winter within the planning area (California Dept. of Fish and Game 1990). In general, most of these residents move into upslope or downslope areas in response to season (i.e., upslope movements in summer, downslope movements in winter) or weather conditions.

The entire planning area and all associated plant communities are considered suitable foraging

habitat for these species. with wash and valley landforms particularly frequented in raptor foraging forays. Home range size varies from an average 2 acres for burrowing owl pairs (Thomsen 1971); to 40-60 square miles for prairie falcon pairs (Harmata *et al.* 1978); and 25-50+ square miles for golden eagle pairs (Snow 1973), though home ranges for individual raptor specie pairs often overlap. In terms of nesting habitat needs, eagles construct stick nests and falcons utilize bare ledges or other bird nests, on cliff or steep hill (>30 degrees slope) landforms; barn and great horned owls are restricted to areas containing existing raptor nests, abandoned mines or, on occasion, dry waterfalls or canyons within washes; and burrowing owl nesting activities are largely restricted to areas containing animal burrows and Mixed Mojave Woody Scrub plant communities. In areas of low human disturbance, site fidelity for most raptor species is relatively high, with most raptor pairs returning to established nesting areas annually (Newton 1979). Many of these established nesting areas contain alternate nest sites that are irregularly used. As many as six golden eagle and five prairie falcon nesting areas have been documented within the subject planning area, but owl nest numbers are currently unknown (Thelander 1974). The concentration of raptor eyries (nest sites) documented in the planning and immediately adjacent area, is considered one of the densest known in the entire CDCA (England 1979b).

The BLM's overall goal in conserving raptor habitat is to: "Provide suitable habitat conditions for birds of prey on public lands through the conservation and management of essential habitat components, including habitat for prey species, especially in areas where birds of prey concentrate during some period of the year, or important habitats where populations are suppressed" (Olendorff *et al.* 1989). Because of its relatively high level of raptor breeding use, the entire planning area was designated as a portion of the "Newberry-Granite Mountain Raptor Breeding Area" in the CDCA Plan (BLM 1980a), as well as a National Key Raptor Area (Olendorff *et al.* 1989; Olendorff and Kochert 1992). Though a raptor HMP incorporating appropriate route designation for the planning area has been prescribed in all these documents, such a plan has yet to be completed.

Identified raptor threats within the planning area include shooting (no documented cases); nest, breeding, and foraging disturbance (vehicle travel, camping, rockclimbing, animal collection); reduction of prey base associated with OHV disturbance; and burrowing owl egg/burrow crushing by vehicles (BLM 1980a). Collisions with autos on high vehicle use routes or roads may also be a significant cause of raptor mortality, particularly in relation to burrowing owls (Martin 1973).

Shooting and collection of raptors may have occurred more frequently in the past (BLM 1980a) and remains a threat, but has not been documented recently within the planning area. Human disturbance of breeding raptors and/or nest sites can cause nest abandonment or egg destruction (Call 1979). Additionally, prairie falcons sometimes avoid portions of their foraging areas that are used by recreationists, returning to said areas only after visitors leave (Harmata *et al.* 1978). Thelander (1974) has also noted that in specific golden eagle foraging and nesting disturbance sites, permanent exclusion of nesting has occurred. The degree of raptor susceptibility to nest abandonment appears to vary with nest site and nesting stage, with proximal disturbance to nests during pre-nesting or early egg development stages resulting in the most severe impacts (Call

1979). In relation to raptor prey base, Bury *et al.* (1977) and others (Busack and Bury 1974; Byrne 1973) have found that vertebrate numbers can decrease by as much as 55% and 20%, in heavily used OHV and staging pit areas, respectively. This latter impact is likely correlated with route and road density, degree of vehicle use and extent of vegetative community fragmentation.

Due to the planning area's significance as raptor habitat, both nesting and foraging habitats are delineated herein as primary biological components in relation to route designation. A 0.5-mile radius circle polygon was identified as a minimum size buffer area necessary around each known raptor nest site, wherein vehicle routes are recommended to be limited in number and extent. Camping should also be limited to specific designated locales, located a minimum distance of a half mile away from known nest sites. Selection of designated camping areas and routes should also consider proximity to suitable, but unoccupied raptor nesting habitat. Non-designated routes and camping areas located immediately below known nest locales should be closed and rehabilitated, so as not to potentially facilitate vehicle travel or camping activities at vulnerable times of the year. The buffer size identified for raptor nesting habitats is based on a common BLM standard (Call 1979), though others have recommended as much as a 4-mile radius buffer (Harmata *et al.* 1978). Ord Pilot buffer areas are depicted as slightly off-center/offset polygons in the accompanying GIS generated map set (Appendix 4), so as not to identify site specificity of known nests. Raptor foraging habitat and quality within the planning area generally mirrors that of desert tortoise, and consequently no attempt is made to portray raptor foraging habitat on the accompanying GIS generated map set.

BAT HABITAT

Resident bat species known to occur within the planning area include: California myotis (*Myotis californicus*), western pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus hesperus*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) and Townsend's pale big-eared bat (*Plecotus = Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens*). The latter two species have been designated State Species of Special Concern (CDFG 1996) and Townsend's big-eared bat populations have declined drastically over the last forty years (Pierson and Rainey 1994). This latter species is also a former Category 2 Candidate for listing as an endangered species by the FWS and is recognized as sensitive by the BLM in Colorado, Idaho, Oregon and Utah, due to documented population declines, habitat loss and roost disturbance.

All the above bats are moth, flying insect, beetle, and arachnid feeders. Bat foraging habitat includes all desert plant communities known to occur within the planning area, though wash and desert spring habitats appear to represent key foraging habitats for all four species. Bat species with poor urine-concentrating ability (i.e., Townsend's big-eared bats), appear to be limited in terms of both foraging and roosting, to areas proximal to water or wetland habitats. Bat species that have good urine concentrating ability (i.e., all other bat species in planning area) appear to require less roost proximity to mesic habitats and generally have less stringent air flow requirements for roosting. Both Townsend's big-eared and pallid bats, are largely dependent on mining shafts/adits within the planning area, that meet appropriate air flow, temperature and ledge strata parameters. Smaller bat species, such as western pipistrelle and California myotis, also utilize mines, but appear to be capable of utilizing rock crevices on canyons and cliffs to a higher

degree (CDFG 1990). In general, bat roosting sites are restricted to the Ord, West Ord and East Ord Mountain vicinities of the planning area, with Ord Mountain supporting the highest degree of use. Other wildlife species, including desert tortoises, chuckwalla lizards (*Sauromalus obesus*), bighorn sheep, owls/passerine birds and small mammals also occasionally utilize these bat roost sites (Brown *et al.* 1995).

No large scale surveys for bats have been conducted to date within the planning area, but several small hibernacula and bachelor roost sites for pallid, Townsend's big-eared and California myotis have been documented (Barstow Resource Area, BLM office files). No definite maternity sites have been documented within the immediate planning area, though small maternity roosts containing as many as 20 adult bats are highly suspected to occur. Several maternity sites have been documented slightly outside the planning area, and these reproduction sites are primarily located in areas with little vehicular access and/or in mines with difficult human entry potential. All bat species occurring within the planning area exhibit high site fidelity at undisturbed sites, returning for use annually or remaining year round.

Consequently, appropriate temperature and air flow mines (particularly mine adit-shaft complexes) near spring and wash habitats, primarily in the Non-Desert Tortoise Emphasis Zone described previously, are considered high quality, potentially occupied Townsend's big-eared bat habitat; and a high proportion of all mines in the planning area are considered potential habitat for other bat species known to occur within the planning area. All of the species occurring within the planning area make local, short distance movements to hibernation roosts, which are occasionally the same sites as those used for reproduction, and foraging ranges rarely exceed a 1-3 mile distance from day roosts (CDFG 1990). In terms of seasonal activities, bats reproduce during April-May, mate in late October-February (with delayed fertilization) and hibernate in October-April.

Documented threats to bat species include inappropriate abandoned mine closure; renewal of mining in occupied bat habitat; recreational caving and human disturbance; animal and roost vandalism via shooting or arson; livestock grazing; vegetative conversion of wash and scrub plant communities to exotic grass communities via fire and mechanical disturbance agents; toxic material impoundments (i.e., cyanide, heavy metals, oil); pesticide spraying; and eradication (Idaho State Conservation Effort 1995). The first four threats should be primary considerations in route designation planning.

Abandoned mine closure has not occurred to any great degree within the planning area, though appropriate closure designed to remove hazardous human situations; allow for vehicle routes in proximity to historic mines; and provide for protected bat habitat, is likely to be a necessary tool in route designation. In relation to disturbance, bats often abandon roost sites following excessive levels of human disturbance (Brown and Berry 1991, Graham 1966, Mohr 1972, Pearson *et al.* 1952, Stebbins 1966). Townsend's big-eared bat, in particular, has been documented to abandon roosts after a single human visitation (CDFG 1990). Barbour and Davis (1969), Graham (1966), and Pierson and Rainey (1994) have all implicated human disturbance as a primary reason for

maternity site abandonment and bat colony population loss. Hibernating bats too, are easily disturbed and arousal resulting from human disturbance can result in bats expending roughly 10-30 days of their body fat reserves during each arousal period (Tuttle 1991). Bats subject to such fat reserve loss during winter months often run out of energy reserves and die of starvation prior to the arrival of spring (Idaho State Conservation Effort 1995). However, Stihler and Hall (1993) have shown that excluding humans from bat roosts via grating and fencing can result in bat population increases.

Habitat vandalism resulting from arson, campfires, and throwing combustible items into mines has been documented within the planning area, though no direct bat vandalism or shooting has been recorded to date (Barstow Resource Area, BLM office files). Fires can degrade air quality and generate toxic gases, as well as burn bats. Fire, and OHV-related soil disturbance, can also be direct factors in relation to vegetative conversion, where exotic grasslands often become established following native scrub fire, removal of established soil crusts, or crushing of shrubs.

Though most bat species known to occur within the planning area are listed as significant species in the CDCA Plan (BLM 1980a), little information is provided in relation to regional area importance, and no specific management direction or description of bat habitat impacts are given. Furthermore, no ACECs or Special Areas (SAs) were designated for any single bat species or association of species, though a few designated wildlife areas coincidentally include important bat use areas. Since 1980, the BLM has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Bat Conservation International (BCI) for the purposes of sharing scarce personnel, field equipment, educational resources and species information. The BLM has also issued several specific national bat policies, including requirements to evaluate abandoned mines prior to closure for their value to wildlife, particularly bats; to ensure steps are taken to prevent unnecessary destruction of bats/habitat; and recognizing the important ecosystem role bats occupy (BLM I.M. No. 93-304, 1993).

No specific bat roosts are identified on the accompanying GIS generated resource component map set, due to the sensitive nature of this data. However, based on the information outlined above, it is recommended that any vehicle route terminating in non-active mine complexes, be closed 0.25-0.5 mile prior to such mines. Such closures would not limit all access to these areas of historical significance, but would also not facilitate easy human access to common shooting, illegal dumping, and potentially hazardous camping areas, as numerous existing routes do.

Effective route closures on mining roads can vary from simple barrier installation or gating/fencing to complete route restoration, using techniques described previously. However, signing generally does not accomplish the task. Where route closures are considered infeasible, and mines are located adjacent to, or at the terminus of routes selected for public vehicle travel, mine shafts and adits should be evaluated for bat and other animal habitat value. Should high value be determined, all openings to such mines should be gated, grated or fenced (Brown and Taylor 1995) in a manner designed to preclude human entry. Special emphasis should be placed on effectively protecting mine complexes in the vicinity of springs and washes. The use of

interpretive signs stressing the importance of mines as habitat for several animal species, particularly bats, is also recommended. However, such interpretive signs should be located in specific, designated high use or access areas, rather than in the immediate vicinity of mines.

DESERT SPRING/ARTIFICIAL WATER/WASH HABITATS

Springs within the planning area (Aztec, Coyote Hole, Goat, Joker, Quill, RZ, Sweetwater Complex, Willow, etc.-Appendix 4) occur on both public and private lands, with the majority developed for former mining operations and current livestock purposes. Little native wetland vegetation remains at these springs, though remnant leather-leaved ash (*Fraxinus velutina*), willow (*Salix nigra*) and cottonwood aggregations do occur at a few. Several wells have also been developed within the planning area, as have eight artificial small game wildlife water catchments or "guzzlers." In general, both springs and guzzlers are located in the central mountainous portion of the planning area.

Wash systems of various size, strata, and vegetative attributes occur throughout the planning area. These include: 1) broad, sandy Daggett Wash, which supports catclaw (*Acacia greggii*) and desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis*) assemblages; 2) narrow, braided West Stoddard Wash and the small washes associated with Daggett Ridge, which support rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*), paper-bag bush (*Salazaria mexicana*) and saltbush (*Atriplex canescens, A. polycarpa, A. lentiformis*) plant assemblages as well as Mojave Desert Wash Scrub plant communities; 3) narrow, sandy canyon washes associated with Quill Spring and West Ord Mountain, which support catclaw assemblages and Creosote Bush Scrub plant communities; 4) broad, rocky Sweetwater Spring Wash, which supports the largest catclaw wash in the planning area; 5) broad, rocky washes draining the southern portion of East Ord Mountain, which support unusually dense Mojave Mixed Woody Scrub plant communities; and 6) boulder strewn washes draining the northeastern face of East Ord Mountain, which support jojoba and Mojave Desert Wash Scrub plant communities. Smaller washes and washlets are also prevalent in all valley/bajada landforms within the planning areas.

Wetland-riparian habitats, including those associated with springs and seeps, are considered the most important and limited wildlife habitat within the CDCA (BLM 1980a). Such areas are the most productive desert habitats (Remsen 1977) and support the majority of all listed, sensitive and designated significant wildlife species in the Mojave Desert. Both breeding and wintering bird densities in such habitats are usually considerably higher than adjacent drier, scrub habitats and often support greater biodiversity. Bighorn sheep and resident upland gamebird species are completely dependent upon water provided by springs within the planning area and neotropical migratory birds, completely dependent upon the associated riparian vegetation.

Artificial waters, particularly upland guzzlers and wells, are also critical resources for resident upland gamebirds. Most upland game guzzlers within the planning area were constructed by the CDFG in the 1970s, though one guzzler has been constructed by the Riverside Chapter of Quail Unlimited in the East Ord Mountain vicinity as recently as 1996. All guzzlers within the planning area are currently maintained by Quail Unlimited volunteers. Due to the planning area's

significance as upland gamebird habitat, it was designated as a Key Upland Game Bird Area in the BLM's Fish and Wildlife 2000 Plan (Sands and Smirthwaite 1992).

Desert washes within the planning area are second in productivity only to wetland-riparian areas. The importance of washes to specific special status wildlife species has already been discussed, but these areas are also critical for common bird, mammal and reptile species as they provide food, cover, nesting sites and perches that don't occur in surrounding landforms, or are found at much lower densities away from wash habitat. Remsen *et al.* (1976a, 1976b, 1976c) found winter bird densities 50-60 times higher in catclaw-rabbitbrush wash than in surrounding desert scrub plant communities. Both desert springs and washes have been identified as vital stopover areas for neotropical migratory bird species during migration, or for breeding. In fact, over 60% of all identified neotropical migrant species, including such designated California Species of Special Concern as yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia*), yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*) and Bendire's thrasher (*Toxostoma bendirei*), as well as blue-gray gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*) and phainopepla (*Phainopepla nitens*), have been documented as dependent upon vegetation associated with springs/riparian areas and washes (Bent 1919-1968, Krueper 1993).

Desert springs attract humans, livestock and wildlife alike, and as a consequence, most have been subjected to a high degree of human influence and/or alteration. This is definitely the case within the planning area, where only a few undeveloped springs remain. In addition to the reduction of water for wildlife that results from most springwater diversions, desert spring threats include livestock grazing and congregation; as well as human occupation and disturbance in the immediate vicinity of springs. These threats are similar for artificial waters. Spring diversion reduces surface water available for wildlife from natural water sources, but can provide more available water from an artificial source (trough) longer into dry seasons. However, artificial water sources are more subject to vandalism, water contamination and disease outbreak than natural waters (i.e., undeveloped springs).

These threats should be primary considerations in relation to route designation, as routes are associated with most springs and all guzzlers within the planning area. In addition, areas where spring water is diverted often experience reductions in wetland-riparian vegetation, due to water limitations. Livestock grazing and congregation impacts upon wetlands, riparian vegetation and guzzlers have been fairly well documented, but are of consequence in route designation planning only in as far as routes or roads can facilitate use of desert springs and guzzlers by livestock. Human camping and visitation too, is a common activity near desert springs, but can result in unacceptable physical impacts (soil compaction, woodcutting, brush clearing, fire) as well as wildlife disturbance impacts (animal avoidance, site abandonment). Current State law requires that human visitations of wildlife waters not exceed 30 minutes, though compliance with this law is very low.

Impacts and threats to desert washes in relation to route designation, include: 1) vehicle-generated soil, vegetation, and hydrological impacts; and 2) wildlife disturbance, injury, and mortality threats, as discussed previously. Luckenbach (1978) has shown in several Mojave and Sonoran

Desert plots, reductions in wash use by breeding birds when such habitats are subjected to OHV use. Moderate OHV use reduced the number of breeding birds by one half, whereas heavy use eliminated all breeding birds.

Due to their high wildlife value and sensitivity, all springs, seeps and riparian or wetland habitats in the CDCA are recognized as highly sensitive UPAs (BLM 1980a); are to be given Special Area (SA) status wherever they occur; and are to be managed according to U.S. Executive Order 11990 (Protection Of Wetlands), as well as BLM Manual 6740 (Wetland Riparian Area Protection and Management). Unfortunately, this direction has been difficult to fulfill since CDCA Plan adoption and has usually resulted in unequitable compromises detrimental to native plant communities and wildlife. More recently, the BLM Riparian-Wetland Initiative (BLM 1991) has directed BLM Field Offices to restore and maintain 75% or more of wetland and riparian sites on public land, in what is referred to as "proper functioning condition." However, the majority of springs within the planning area have been currently rated as either "non-functioning" or "functioning at risk."

Washes too, are recognized by the current land use plan (CDCA Plan, BLM 1980a) as sensitive wildlife habitats. Vehicle travel within washes is to be allowed only on approved routes within Class L areas, with vehicle travel within washes of Class M areas restricted to all routes existing as of 1980. All designated sensitive habitats are intended to be managed in a holistic approach (BLM 1980a). As land use planning, national policy, habitat significance and current conditions warrant completion of route designation within the CDCA, several recommendations are forwarded with regard to desert springs, artificial waters and washes:

1) routes terminating at springs should be closed 0.25-0.5 mile prior to route terminus, utilizing barriers, gating, fencing or route restoration and revegetation techniques, so as to not facilitate potential habitat impacts, animal disturbance, or human occupancy at these critical wildlife water sites;

2) springs located adjacent to routes selected for public use should be fenced with large, low-maintenance exclosures, so as to minimize potential habitat impacts and animal disturbance threats at critical wildlife water sites;

3) routes terminating at wildlife water guzzlers should be gated 025-0.5 mile prior to route terminus, using additional fencing or barriers where necessary, so as to not facilitate potential improvement vandalism, human occupancy, or animal disturbance, yet also provide for improvement maintenance;

4) wildlife water guzzlers located adjacent to routes selected for public use should be fenced with large, low-maintenance exclosures, to minimize potential improvement vandalism, human occupancy, and animal disturbance threats;

5) designated campgrounds should be located a minimum of 0.5 mile from springs/guzzlers, to minimize potential animal disturbance threats;

6) abandoned wells located adjacent to routes selected for public use should be fenced with small, low-maintenance exclosures; to minimize human safety hazards yet provide wildlife access to occasional water;

7) routes selected for designated vehicle travel within all washes of the planning area should be limited in number and extent, to improve chances for desert tortoise recovery;

8) selection of potential wash routes should focus on single route designation within broad, relatively open washes (e.g., Daggett Wash) rather than in narrow, braided washes with high vegetative cover (e.g., West Stoddard/Daggett Ridge Washes), to avoid inadvertently crushing animals and animal burrows; and

9) selection of potential wash routes should also focus on avoidance of high density Mojave Mixed Woody Scrub and Mojave Desert Wash plant communities, as these are critical bird habitats.

SPECIAL STATUS PLANTS/UNUSUAL PLANT ASSEMBLAGES

Two BLM designated sensitive plant species, the Mojave monkeyflower (*Mimulus mohavensis*) and the curved-pod Mojave milkvetch (*Astragalus mohavensis var. hemigyrus*) have been reported as occurring within the planning area. Both are small annual plants, formally Category 2 Candidates for Federal listing as endangered species, and recognized by the California Native Plant Society as List 1B species, or "rare and endangered in California and elsewhere" (Smith and York 1984). The type locality for the former species is considered the Mojave River, although the Ord, Calico and Ore Grand Mountain ranges are considered the primary occurrence localities for the species. The type locality for the latter species is listed as "south of Indian Springs, Charleston Mountains, Nevada," and the record listed for the subject planning area may be in error, as this species is known from only one documented site in California: Darwin Mesa, located far north of the subject planning area.

Mojave monkeyflower has been documented to occur on lower portions of slopes and washes in the northern third of the planning area, in an elevation range of 2000-3000 feet. The species blooms in April-May in Creosote Bush Scrub, Mojave Mixed Woody Scrub and Mojave Desert Wash Scrub plant communities. This species can occur on rocky slopes, but is most frequently encountered on slopes or washlets containing small cobble or sand substrate, and may be associated with carbonaceous substrate. The curved-pod Mojave milkvetch, a confirmed carbonaceous substrate associate, is known to occur on hillslopes and mesas in Creosote Bush Scrub and Mojave Mixed Woody Scrub plant communities. It has been reported from the Goat Spring vicinity of the planning area, but its presence within the planning area has never been confirmed. Sightings of the plant on Darwin Mesa and in the Charleston Mountains date from the early 1940s. Reported and documented locations of both species are not depicted on the accompanying Biological Resource Component Map Set, due to the sensitive, site-specific nature of the data.

Three unusual plant assemblages or UPAs (East Ord Mountain Jojoba UPA, Johnson and Lucerne

Valley Creosote Bush Clone UPA, and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clones UPA) also occur within the subject planning area (BLM 1980a), including possibly the northernmost population of jojoba and some of the oldest known examples of creosote/yucca clonal rings. These rings range in size from a few feet in diameter to over 25 feet in width, with all clonal associations radiating out from a single ancestral plant. These clonal assemblages encompass the entire southern half of the planning area and are depicted on the accompanying GIS generated Resource Component Map Set (Appendix 4) by green dot stippling. A small petrified stand of yuccas is also present within the planning area, but is not depicted on the accompanying Biological Resource Component Map Set, due to the sensitive, site-specific nature of the data. Two fenced, five acre exclosures have been dedicated to the protection of representative yucca/creosote clonal growths in the adjacent Johnson Valley OHV Area, and have been designated the Fry Mountain Ancient Yucca Ring ACEC and Johnson Valley Creosote Clone ACEC, respectively. The jojoba UPA is fairly localized, and is situated in a boulder-strewn wash on the northeastern face of East Ord Mountain. This UPA is currently unfenced with several OHV trails dissecting the assemblage. This UPA, and potentially suitable habitat for this assemblage, is similarly depicted by green dot stippling on the accompanying GIS generated Resource Component Map Set (Appendix 4).

Few direct road or route impacts to special status plant populations have been documented within the planning area, though some existing roads and vehicle travel in the northern/central portions of the planning area have likely eliminated or altered both Mojave monkeyflower and jojoba distribution. In a few situations, roads have provided access for illegal dumping, mining, and OHV activities which have indirectly resulted in monkeyflower habitat disturbance (Barstow Resource Area, BLM office files). If the curved-pod Mojave milkvetch does indeed occur in the Goat Spring vicinity, it too may have been affected by road and/or OHV use, as the area contains a high road and trail density. Similarly, few instances of direct intentional, yucca/creosote ring crushing have been documented within the planning area, though numerous existing OHV trails do currently dissect creosote rings in the southern portion of the planning area. Creosote bushes can crown-resprout when sheared or crushed, but if destroyed by pipeline or powerline installation, vehicles or fire, creosote can take hundreds of years to recolonize and recover (Vasek 1980, 1983; Vasek *et al.* 1975a, 1975b).

Other indirect impacts to both sensitive plant species and unusual plant assemblages associated with roads and vehicle travel include: 1) alterations to soil thermal structure, water infiltration, water storage capability and seed germination strategies in the immediate vicinity of roads and routes (Bury *et al.* 1977); 2) facilitation of exotic plant (primarily exotic Mediterranean annual grass and forb species) establishment on road shoulders and adjacent areas (Brooks 1992, Tyser and Worley 1992); and 4) provision of access for vegetation collection (a few illegal cactus harvesting operations have been documented slightly outside planning area-Barstow Resource Area, BLM office files), target shooting (yuccas are frequently used as target backdrops) and sources of wildfire (shooting, vehicles, campfires). The cumulative effect of these impacts in specific areas can facilitate vegetative community conversion of desert scrublands adapted to a low fire frequency, to exotic grasslands which stimulate regular fire occurrence regimes (D'Antonio and Vitousek 1992).

In relation to primary and secondary roads, Tyser and Worley (1992), among others, have documented an alien plant species richness decline in areas radiating out from roads, suggesting that alien species are successfully invading grasslands and other habitat types from roadside areas. In study sites adjacent to backcountry trails, absence of a comparable decline and unexpectedly high levels of alien species richness 100m from the trailside, suggest that alien species have been introduced in off-trail areas (Tyser and Worley 1992). This impact is likely magnified in areas with livestock grazing, particularly in year-long grazing such as the planning area. Livestock often use roads, trails, and areas immediately adjacent as travel zones; assist in alien seed dispersal; disturb soil crusts; and consume many native plant seed sources as well as germination cover sites.

The frequency of fires within the Mojave Desert is significantly related to winter rainfall levels and appear to be most prevalent in areas where Asian or European weeds are established (FWS 1994). The relationships between fire, disturbance, and vegetative community changes are complex and are not necessarily associated with changes in climate (Brown and Minnich 1986, Humphrey 1963). But once fires occur, they may improve opportunities for exotic plant invasions or increase the numbers of weeds in a particular area, and further influence fire occurrence frequency (O'Leary and Minnich 1981).

Federal policies (Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 24; BLM Manuals 6500/6840; Willoughby *et al.*1992) in relation to rare, threatened and endangered plant species, conserve such species in a self-sustaining, ecosystem manner and to utilize its authorities in furtherance of purposes the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and similar State laws. The objectives of all programs in the CDCA are directed to include means of conserving State/Federal listed plants, promote delisting and to maintain or enhance the ecosystems on which they depend (BLM 1980a). Objectives with regard to Federal Candidate and CNPS List 1/2 plant species are directed to be similar, with an emphasis on making their official listing unnecessary. UPA management in the planning area is likewise directed to protect highly sensitive UPAs (Johnson/Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clones) and very sensitive UPAs (Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clones and East Ord Mountain Jojoba Assemblage), in a manner which preserves the habitat and ensures the continued existence of the plant assemblage (BLM 1980a). Tools specified for use in accomplishing required UPA management objectives include ACEC/SA designation and road designation restrictions in Class L areas (BLM 1980a).

Based on the above information, all OHV play routes and low use, non-thoroughfare roads should be closed when they are in proximity to: 1) Mojave monkeyflower populations (north planning area); 2) Curved-pod Mojave milkvetch populations (West Ord Mountain vicinity, if confirmed); 3) East Ord Jojoba UPA; 4) high yucca ring vandalism areas; or 5) high fire potential areas. Every effort should be made to at least minimally complete vegetative restoration of closed routes, in a manner conducive to maximizing native plant reestablishment.

CONCLUSION

The persistence of small tortoise populations (FWS 1994) and for that matter, all wildlife

populations, is subject to the effects of environmental stochasticity, catastrophes and demographic/genetic stochasticity. Consequently, in small planning areas the largest possible blocks of high quality tortoise habitat, as well as other sensitive wildlife habitat, containing the highest density population segments and number of linkages to other segments, should be selected for reserve level management (Noss 1991) or DWMAs.

As tortoise population declines and threats to other known sensitive species are associated with high densities of access routes and vehicular traffic (Schoenwald-Cox and Buechner 1992); and the subject planning area is relatively small; vehicle access within such reserves or designated DWMAs should be highly controlled. In doing so, chances for tortoise recovery are maximized and the viability of other special status wildlife and plant populations occurring within the planning area would be better assured. This recommended degree of protection is entirely consistent with Limited Use Class designation (CDCA Plan, BLM 1980a) assigned to the majority of the planning area and U.S. Executive Orders 11644/11989 (Off-Road Vehicles On Public Lands). The application of GIS generated biological resource component presentation and accompanying resource delineation rationale discussed herein, are considered applicable to wider-scale West Mojave Desert route designation. Such site-specific resource categorization should enable land managers to ensure an equitable balance between resource conservation, vehicle access, and recreational opportunities.

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APPENDIX 1

REPORT

Wildlife Biologists' Workgroup on Designation of Routes for the Ord Mountain Pilot Project

November 1, 1995

Purpose of Workgroup

The Workgroup was assembled to provide the Technical Review Team of the Ord Mountain Pilot Route Designation Project with 1) a biological basis for limiting routes, and 2) guidelines for selecting those routes which should be closed to protect natural elements of the ecosystem. It was intended that the Workgroup would provide a consensus of a group of wildlife management biologists.

Meetings

Meetings were held in the Bureau of Land Management's California Desert District Office in Riverside on August 29, September 19, September 28, and October 24. Those in attendance are listed in Appendix A.

Workgroup Consensus

Basis for Route Closures

The negative effects of routes on ecosystem elements are difficult to identify and even more difficult to quantify. Many of the effects are indirect and are due to human activities which occur as a consequence of the access provided by the route network. The nature and degree of these effects will differ by type of route. Negative effects include, but are not limited to, those listed below.

Direct mortality of animals from runovers.

Loss of vegetation/habitat degradation due to off-highway vehicle cross-country travel.

Destruction of animal burrows due to off-highway vehicle cross-country travel.

Loss of vegetation/habitat degradation due to camping and associated activities.

Erosion and loss of topsoil resulting from destruction of cryptogamic crust due to off-highway vehicle cross-country travel.

Loss of native vegetation/habitat degradation due to invasion of exotic (weedy) plant species.

Direct reduction in tortoise and other animal populations from collecting for pets.
Direct reduction in tortoise populations from collecting of tortoises for rituals.
Direct mortality of animals from shooting.
Increase in predation by ravens due to increased food in the form of trash and roadkills.
Reduced survivorship of animals due to loss of hearing from excessive noise.
Reduced survivorship/productivity in animals due to disturbance or displacement from excessive noise.

Literature dealing with these effects is available in files in offices Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and in published books and journals. Dave Kalarsky of BLM, Ridgecrest Resource Area Office, has gathered copies of the literature referenced in the Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan; many of these references address the effects of vehicles.

Quantifiable Objectives

The Workgroup believes it is important to have a quantifiable objective (i.e., management threshold or goal) for the route designation process. Previous attempts at route designation were ineffective for a variety of reasons. Among these was the lack of a meaningful overall objective.

The following quantitative objectives were developed by the Workgroup. There was general concurrence on the specified quantitative objectives for application in the Pilot Project. Concurrence on their general application throughout the West Mojave was reserved pending outcome of the Pilot Project.

- In a core reserve, at least 75 percent of the area is not near a designated open route.

- In a managed-use zone, at least 67 percent of the area is not near a designated open route.

For these purposes, "near" is defined as follows:

Paved road with no tortoise-proof fencing -	880 yards
Paved road with tortoise-proof fencing -	10 yards
Maintained (i.e., graded) dirt road -	440 yards
Unmaintained dirt road -	300 yards
OR with designated camping areas -	200 yards
Single track (i.e., motorcycle) route -	100 yards
OR with designated camping areas -	50 yards

The above values are based on a subjective evaluation of the various anticipated negative effects listed previously. The distances can be viewed as a relative weighting factor to be applied to each route. Since the weighting factor is in units of distance (i.e., width of route effects) the factor times the length of the route yields a weighting factor in units of area.

Designated wilderness should be removed entirely from the area of analysis.

Routes that are designated for "limited use" by a single or small group of users on an occasional basis would not be included in the analysis if it can be reasonably expected that others will not use the route on a regular basis. This will likely require some form of access control.

Suggested Application Using Geographic Information Systems

Using a Geographic Information System (GIS), each route can be considered one at a time. The area of the route can be readily computed based on the actual route length and the assigned width. As routes are added to the network according to pre-established priorities, a running sum of the areas of the routes can be made. When this sum totals, 25 or 33 percent of the area being examined, no further routes are added to the network.

Biological Priorities for Selection of Routes

Following are guidelines for the selection of routes. The guidelines are based on biological factors. The guidelines are not absolute filters, but will be considered along with other non-biological factors in making route designation decisions. The significance of each factor will depend upon the actual values present within a given area. For example, the size of a riparian area or the distance, where adjacent to a biological value. It is assumed that other technical groups will develop similar guidelines based on access needs, off-highway vehicle recreational values, other recreation concerns, etc. A rationale is appended to some of the guidelines; no attempt was made to make the rationale comprehensive.

A significance rating is also appended to each guideline. The rating definitions are the following: high - where this value occurs, the route should be deleted, medium - need to delete the route is less compelling, but values are significant, low - need to delete the route is the least compelling among the factors listed. It is important to remember, that these are only general significance ratings; the actual values present may increase or decrease the significance greatly.

General Ecosystem Elements

1. Routes are duplicative, that is, go between the same points. [HIGH]

2. Route facilitates unauthorized cross-country travel, staging, or camping. [HIGH]

3. Route is within moderate to large wash. [HIGH]
   (These washes carry a regular surface flow and often subsurface water which can support larger shrubs or trees. These in turn provide shade, cover, and food for wildlife. These plants are easily destroyed in the sandy soil.)

4. Route is within small washes or in area of abundant washlets. [MEDIUM]
   (These areas indicate the presence of occasional surface water; an abundance of sensitive spring and/or fall annuals can be expected.)

5. Route has little to no vehicle use and is partially restored. [MEDIUM]
   (Natural restoration of a route is very slow in the desert. Where lack of use indicates little need for a route, it is advantageous to use whatever natural restoration has occurred.)

Desert Tortoise, Burrowing Mammal, and Burrowing Owl

1. Route traverses known tortoise concentration area. [HIGH]

2. Route crosses wide, gently sloping, loamy bajada. [MEDIUM]
   (These areas are excellent burrowing habitat, and the good [relative to most desert soils] soil structure produces better quality forage.)

3. Route goes along the lower third of a lone hill on a bajada. [LOW]
   (These areas are commonly used in the fall and winter by tortoises.)

Bighorn Sheep

1. Route crosses or passes adjacent to a lambing, ewe concentration, or watering area. [HIGH]
   (Ewes and lambs are highly dependent upon specific sites. If they are forced out of an area, survivorship will likely be reduced.)

2. Route crosses known bighorn sheep travel corridor. [MEDIUM]

3. Route facilitates livestock use of bighorn sheep foraging or watering area. [MEDIUM]

Raptors

1. Route passes near (i.e., within 1/2 mile) of known raptor nest or eyrie, usually on a cliff face or in riparian zone. Seasonal restrictions on vehicle use may suffice. [LOW]

Bats

1. Route passes near a bat roost or nursery site, usually in a cave or abandoned mine. Seasonal restrictions on vehicle use will not suffice due to the potential for year round use and because of the high potential for habitat degradation. [HIGH]

Special Status Plants

1. Route bisects or is immediately adjacent to a special status plant population. [HIGH]

Riparian Areas

1. Route lies within or immediately adjacent to a riparian zone. [HIGH]
   (Riparian areas provide shade, cover, food, and water for wildlife over a much larger area. Riparian areas are critical to rare amphibians and migratory birds, which might be ill-suited to desert environs.)

2. Route crosses a riparian area without a bridge or hardened surface. [LOW]
   (Such crossings effect water quality negatively.)

Upland Water Source

1. Route passes adjacent to or terminates at a natural or improved spring or seep, upland game or big game guzzler, or abandoned well. [HIGH]
   (Many wildlife species, such as upland gamebirds, are highly dependent upon open water.)

APPENDIX A

Participants in Wildlife Biologists' Workgroup on Designation of Routes for the West Mojave Coordinated Management Plan

Workgroup Participants

Name/ Position	Affiliation	Meetings Attended
Kristin Berry Research Scientist	NBS, Riverside Field Station	8/29, 9/19, 10/24
Brad Blomquist OHV Coordinator/Recreation Planner	BLM, Barstow Resource Area	8/29, 9/19, 9/28, 10/24
Tom Clark Chief of Natural Resources	NPS, Capitol Reef (formerly, BLM, West Mojave Plan)	10/24
Tom Dodson Consultant	Desert Tortoise Council and Desert Tortoise Preserve Comm.	8/29, 10/24
Tom Egan Wildlife Biologist	BLM, Barstow Resource Area	8/29, 9/19, 9/28
Larry Foreman Wildlife Biologist	BLM, Calif. Desert Dist.	8/29, 9/19, 9/28, 10/24
Mitch Hathaway Geophysicist	American Motorcycle Assoc. and Calif. Off-Road Veh. Assoc.	8/29, 9/19
Lisa Kegarice Consultant	Desert Tortoise Council	9/28
Doug Laye Wildlife Biologist	USFWS, Ventura	9/28
Ed LaRue Consultant	Desert Tortoise Council and Desert Tortoise Preserve Comm.	9/28
Mike McGill Wildlife Biologist	BLM, Needles Resource Area	8/29
Nancy Nicolai	BLM, El Centro Res. Area	8/29

Wildlife Biologist		
Bob Parker Wildlife Biologist	BLM, Ridgecrest Res. Area	8/29, 9/19, 9/28
Sandy Vissman Wildlife Biologist	USFWS, Carlsbad	9/28
Kirk Wain Wildlife Biologist	USFWS, Ventura	9/28

Other Attendees

Mike Ahrens	Calif. Assoc. of 4-Wheel Clubs	9/27, 10/24
Dana Bell	American Motorcycle Assoc.	9/27, 10/24
Steve Bonar	BLM, Barstow Resource Area	10/24
John Butz	BLM, Calif. Desert District	9/19
Dan Cooper	Calif. Off-Road Vehicle Assoc.	8/29, 9/19
Dave Kotlarski	BLM, Ridgecrest Resource Area	9/19
Edy Seehafer	BLM, Barstow Resource Area	10/24
Al Stein	BLM, Calif. Desert District	9/19, 10/24

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Ord Mountain Route Pilot Area
Tortoise Transect Data
Compiled 3/26/97
Thomas B. Egan, BLM

Refer to attached map set: Ord Mtn., West Ord Mtn., Whitehorse Mtn., Grandview Mine USGS 7.5 min quads. Minneola, Daggett, Camp Rock Mine, Fry Mtns,

ID	DATE	TRANSECT (1.5 mi. length)(10 yd width)	LEGAL 1	GEO	ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG MED HI COVER	HABITAT COND DIST-roads, OHV, sheep
)	10/26/77	244	T6N R1E S13 W1/2	Bajada	4050	SAND, GRAVEL	LATR-AMDU	8, 9, 4.

1 Burrow, good cond. (3) w/ 1 scat., (partially filled). Slope: 5%.
4 Scat, 4 in shrub - 2 condition 3; 2 condition 2. CS=2 ADE=20-50 DT/sqmi Nicholson.
M

)	10/27/77	(1.5 mi. length)(10 yd width) 248	T7N R2E S8 SE1/4	Bajada	4000	GRAVEL/ROCK	HI COVER LATR-YUSC	DIST-CAMP, Roads 3, 8.

No DT sign. CS=0 ADE=0-20 DT/sqmi Slope: 4%.
L Nicholson.

)	10/27/77	(1.5 mi. length)(10 yd width) 249	T6N R2E S15 SE1/4	Bajada	3500	GRAVEL/SAND	MED COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-roads, sheep 8, 4.

1 Burrow, good cond. (2), (opp. not used recently). Slope: 0-5%.
2 Scat, in shrubs, condition 2 Nicholson.
1 Shell (F), cracked or broken, crushed. CS=2 ADE=20-50 DT/sq mi
M

)	10/27/77	(1.5 mi. length)(10 yd width) 250	T5N R2E S7 E1/2	Valley	3200	SAND/GRAVEL	MED COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-RWD, SPRW, OHV 8, 9, 4.

8 Burrows, 4 cond. 2 (opp not used recently), 1 active; 3 cond. 6 (caved in). Slope: 0-3%.
9 Scat, 6 cond 2; 3 cond. 3. Nicholson.
1 Shell (F), entire. CS=5 ADE=50-100 DT/sq mi
H

)	05/27/77	(5280 feet)(10 yd width) 255	T5N R1E S5 SE1/4	Valley	3000	SAND/GRAVEL	MED COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-Sheep 4.

2 Shells, cracked broken or crushed. CS=2 ADE=20-50 DT/sq mi Slope: 1-2%.
M Hoover/Pearson.

)	05/27/77	(5280 feet)(10 yd width) 256	T5N R1E S5 SE1/4	M Valley / Bajada	3000	SAND/GRAVEL	MED COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-Sheep 4.

Possible Burrow Collapsed; 1 Shell cracked. CS=1 ADE=20-50 DT/sq mi Slope: 1-2%.
Hoover.

)	10/26/77	(1.5 mi. length)(10 yd width) 243	T7N R1E S22 W1/2	Valley	3900	GRAVEL	MED HI COVER LATR-YUSC	DIST-Roads 8.

No DT Sign. CS=0 ADE=0-20 DT/sq mi Slope: 0-5%.
L Nicholson.

#	ID	DATE	TRANSECT	LEGAL	GEO	ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	HABITAT COND	SLOPE
3			(1.5 mi)(10 yd width)					MED COVER	DIST-OHV	
		06/04/77	259	T7N R2W S4 SE1/4	VALLEY	3275(?) ↓ appears to be 3080	SAND	LATR-AMDU	9	2%
		1 Shell in open, crushed. CS=1 M					ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI			Hoover
1			(1.5 mi.)(10 yd width)					MED COVER	DIST-CATTLE	
		06/08/77	265	T7N R2E S9 SE1/4	BAJADA	3900 ↓ appears to be 3840	SAND	LATR-YUSC	3	2-4%
		1 Burrow active w/1 scat CS=1 M					ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI			Pearson Hoover
10			(7920 ft)(10 yd width)					MED COVER	DIST-OCC DIST ROAD	
		09/27/78	1148	T7NR2W S1 W1/2	BAJADA	3400	COARSE SAND	LATR-AMDU	13	2.3%
		1 Burrow, good condition (3) partially filled. CS=1 M					ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI			Karl
11			(7920 ft)(10 yd width)					MED COVER	DIST-CREEK FOR HUNTING	
		09/26/78	1147	T8NR1W S33 E1/2	VALLEY	3000	COARSE SAND	LATR-AMDU	13	1%
		2 Burrows, 1 good cond partially filled + 1 good cond partially filled & used by other animals								Karl
		1 Scat in open								
		2 Shells both entire. CS=3 M					ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI			
12			(7920 ft)(10 yd width)					HI COVER	DIST-OCC. DIST ROADS	
		09/27/78	1149	T7NR1W S25 W1/2	BAJADA	4280	COARSE SAND/ROCKS	LATR-YUSC	13	6%
		No DT sign. CS=0 L					ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI			Karl
13			(7920 ft)(10 yd width)					HI COVER	DIST-OCC DIST ROAD	
		09/27/78	1151	T7NR1E S23 E1/2	BAJADA/HILLS	4280	SAND/ROCKS	LATR-YUSC	13	6%
		No DT Sign CS=0 L					ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI			Karl
14			(7920 ft)(10 yd width)					MED COVER	DIST-OCC ROADS	
		09/27/78	1152	T6NR1E S1 N1/2	BAJADA	4000	SAND/SM. ROCKS	LATR-TESP	13	5%
		No DT SIGN CS=0 L					ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI			Karl
15			(7920 ft)(10 yd width)					LOW COVER	DIST-OCC ROADS	
		09/27/78	1153	T6NR2E S29 NW1/4	BAJADA	3400	SAND	LATR-AMDU	13	2%
		1 Burrow caved in, CS=1 M					ADE = 20-50 DT SQ MI			Karl

ID	DATE	TRANSECT (7920ft)(10 yd width)	LEGAL	GEO	ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	HABITAT COND	SLOPE
)	9-27-78	1150	T7NR1ES21E½	BAJADA	4000	SAND/SM. ROCKS	HI COVER LATR-YUSC	DIST-OCC ROADS 13	~4%

No DT sign. CS=0 ADE=0-20 DT/SQ MI Karl

L

)	10-21-78	1166	T6NR1E S14 SW¼	BAJADA	3720	SAND/DES. PAVE	HI COVER LATR-YUSC	DIST-SHEEP/ROADS 4, 13	3.8%

3 Burrows; 1 in good cond partially filled, 1 good cond not app recent use, 1 partially caved in Karl

3 Scat in area. CS=2 ADE=20-50 DT/SQ MI

M

)	11/9/77	1331 (3mi)(10 yd width)	T7NR1W S4,9,10,15	VALLEY	3050-3450	SAND/GRAVEL	MED COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-Roads, SHEEP, OHV 4, 8, 9	0-5%

1 Burrow caved in Nicholson

1 Shell crushed juvenile CS=2 ADE=20-50 DT/SQ MI

M

)	11/9/77	1330 (3mi)(10 yd width)	T7NR1W S4,9,10,15	VALLEY	3050-3450	SAND/GRAVEL	MED COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-Roads, Sheep, OHV 4, 8, 9	0-5%

No DT sign. CS=0 ADE=0-20 DT/SQ MI Nicholson

L

)	11/9/77	1332 (3mi)(10 yd width)	T7-8N R1W S34,4,3,10,15	VALLEY	3050-3500	SAND/GRAVEL	MED COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-ROADS, SHEEP, OHV 4, 8, 9	0-5%

4 Burrows; 1 active, 1 caved in, 1 good no app recent use, 1 partially filled at entrance Nicholson

1 Live Tortoise Juvenile

2 Shells. CS=4 ADE=50-180 DT/SQ MI

H

)	11/9/77	1333 (9mi)(10 yd width)	T7-8NR1W S34,3,10,11,14	VALLEY	3050-3500	SAND/GRAVEL	MED COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-ROADS, SHEEP, OHV 4, 8, 9	0-5%

1 Burrow partially filled at entrance. CS=1 ADE=20-50 DT/SQ MI Nicholson

M

2)	9/19/79	1465 (1.5mi)(10 yd Width)	T9N RIE S36 N½	BAJADA, LOW HILL	3800	GRAVEL	MED COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-CATTLE, SHEEP 3-8	0-5%

1 Burrow Good act app. recently used. CS=1 ADE=20-50 DT/SQ MI Nicholson

M

3)	9/19/79	1466 (1.5mi)(10 yd width)	T7NR2E S6 NW¼	BAJADA, HILL	3950	GRAVEL/SAND	MED COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-CATTLE, SHEEP 3-8	0-5%

No DT sign. CS=0 ADE=0-20 DT/SQ MI Nicholson

L

#	DATE	TRANSECT (1.5 mi)(10 yd width)	LEGAL	GEO / ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	HAB. COND. DIST.-SHEEP,	SLOPE Roads
24	9/19/79	1467	T7NR2ES55½	BAJADA, HILLS 4000	GRAVEL, ROCK	LATR/CORA	3, 8	0-7%

No DT sign. (CS=0) (ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI) [L] Nicholson

#	DATE	TRANSECT (1.5 mi)(10 yd width)	LEGAL	GEO / ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	DIST-OHV, ROADS	
25	10/26/77	241	T8N/9NR1W S33E4 SW¼/NW¼	WASH/GULLY 2800	GRAVEL, ROCK	LATR/AMDU	8, 9	0-10%

6 DT Burrows (2 active, 2 good shape w/ entrance partially filled w/ debris, 1 caved in, 1 good shape not used recently) Nicholson

2 DT scats (CS=2) (ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI) [M]

#	DATE	TRANSECT (1.5 mi)(10 yd width)	LEGAL	GEO / ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	DIST-SHEEP, ROADS, OHV	
26	10/26/77	242	T8NR1W S25E½	VALLEY 3250	GRAVEL/SAND	LATR/AMDU	4, 9, 9	0-5%

4 DT Burrows (2 active, 2 in good shape but apparently not used recently) Nicholson

4 DT Scats. (CS=2) (ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI) [M]

#	DATE	TRANSECT (1.5 mi)(10 yd width)	LEGAL	GEO / ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	DIST-SHEEP, ROADS	
27	10/27/77	246	T9NR1ES34 NW¼	BAJADA 2500	GRAVEL	LATR/AMDU	4, 8	0-5%

6 DT Burrows (1 active, 5 in good shape but apparently not used recently) Nicholson

9 Scat. (CS=2) (ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI) [M]

#	DATE	TRANSECT (1.75 mi)(10 yd width)	LEGAL	GEO / ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	DIST-SHEEP	
28	6/9/77	266	T9NR1ES33 SW¼	VALLEY 2700	GRAVEL/SAND	LATR/AMDU	4	3%

16 DT Burrows (2 plugged/caved in, 6 active, 1 good shape w/ no apparent recent use, 5 good shape w/ minor debris at entrance, 3 taken over by other animals) Pearson/Hoover

1 DT within burrow

1 Burrowing owl

15 DT scat. (CS=6) (ADE = 50-100 DT/SQ MI) [H]

#	DATE	TRANSECT (1.25 mi)(10 yd width)	LEGAL	GEO / ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	DIST-SHEEP	
29	6/17/77	267	T9N R1E S35 SW¼	BAJADA 2600	SAND	LATR/AMDU	4	5%

3 DT Burrows, all taken over by other animals Pearson/Hoover

3 DT Scats. (CS=1) (ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI) [M]

#	DATE	TRANSECT (1 mi)(10 yd width)	LEGAL	GEO / ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	DIST-SHEEP	
30	6/17/77	268	T9NR1E S34 NE¼	BAJADA 2450	SAND	LATR/AMDU	4	7%

1 DT Burrow, in good shape w/ some debris at entrance Pearson/Hoover

1 DT Scat. (CS=1) (ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI) [M]

PID	DATE	TRANSECT # (1.5 mi)(10 yd width)	LEGAL	GEO	ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	HAB COND	SLOPE
31	3/24/78	0957	T9N R1E S33 SE¼	BAJADA	2700	SAND	YUSC-LATR	DIST-SHEEP 4	3%

5 DT Burrows, 2 active, 1 taken over by other animal, 1 caved in, 1 in good shape but app. not used recently Hoover

5 DT Scat

4 Live DT

3 Shells. CS=7 (H) ADE = 50-100 DT/SQ MI

32	3/24/78	(1.5 mi)(10 yd width) 0958	T8N R1E S5 E½	BAJADA	2900	SAND	LATR/AMDU	DIST-SHEEP 4	3-5%

2 Live Adult DT. CS=2 (M) ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI Hoover

3	3/24/78	(1.5 mi)(10 yd width) 0959	T8N R1W S15 SE¼	WASH/HILLS	3000	Rock/Gravel	YUSC-LATR	DIST-SHEEP 4	3-10%

1 Live Adult DT. CS=1 (M) ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI Hoover

4	9/20/79	(1.5 mi)(10 yd width) 1470	SE¼ NE¼ T8N/9N R1E S35/S2	BAJADA	2500	GRAVEL	LATR-AMDU	DIST-ROADS 8	0-5%

11 DT Burrows (2 active, 5 good shape w/ no app. recent use, 3 in good shape w/ some debris at entrance, 1 taken over by another animal) Nicholson

14 DT Scat

3 Live adult DT. CS=5 (H) ADE = 50-100 DT/SQ MI

5	9/20/79	(1.5 mi)(10 yd width) 1471	SE¼/NE¼ T8N R1E S2 ES11	BAJADA	3000	GRAVEL	LATR-AMDU	DIST-ROADS, SHEEP 8, 4	1-5%

4 DT Burrows (1 active, 1 in good shape w/ no app. recent use, 2 in good shape w/ minor debris at entrance) Nicholson

4 DT Scat

1 live DT adult, 1 shell. CS=2 (M) ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI

6	9/24/79	(1.5 mi)(10 yd width) 1472	T8N R1E S26 SE¼	BAJADA	3700	GRAVEL	LATR-AMDU	DIST-CATTLE 3	0-5%

No DT sign observed, but several carnivore burrows observed that could be used by DT Nicholson

CS=0 (L) ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI

7	9/24/79	(1.5 mi)(10 yd width) 1473	T8N R1E S23 Central	HILLS	3800	GRAVEL/ROCK	LATR-AMDU	DIST-CATTLE, ROADS 8, 3	1-7%

1 live DT adult. CS=1 (M) ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI

PID	DATE	TRANSECT # (1.5 mi)(10 yd width)	LEGAL	GEO	ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	HAB. COND DIST-CATTLE/ROADS	SLOPE
(38)	9/24/79	1474	T8NR1E S14E½	BAJADA	3400	GRAVEL/SAND	LATR/AMDU	3,8	0-5%

1 DT Burrow, with no app. recent use but in good shape — Nicholson

5 DT Scat

1 Live DT adult, CS=2 (M) ADE=20-50 DT/SQ MI

End CDCA Transects for Ord Pilot, Begin T. Egan sightings/transects (1990-1997)

(1)	3/97	(0.5 mi)	T6N R1E S3½ NWNE	BAJADA	3700	GRAVEL/SAND	Low cover YUSC-LATR	DIST-OHV, ROADS, CAMPING 8,9	5%

1 DT Burrow, active — Egan

2 Different size scat. CS=2 (M) ADE=20-50 DT/SQ MI — Susie Baldwin MS. Thesis Site

(2)	5/94	(0.5 mi)	T6N R2E S29 NWNW	BAJADA	3860	GRAVEL/SAND	MED COVER YUSC-LATR	DIST-OHV, ROADS, CAMPING 8,9	

1 DT Burrow; active. CS=1 (M) ADE=20-50 DT/SQ MI — Egan.

JSR Scoping with Tom Dodson

(3)	2/97	(0.5 mi)	T6N R2E S17 SWSE	BAJADA	3600	GRAVEL	Hi cover YUSC-high density/Cactus	Low Distm	1-5

No DT sign CS=0 (L) ADE=0-20 DT/SQ MI — Egan

Rt. Desing Tour with Ed LaRue

(4)	9/95	(0.5 mi)	In saddle/on slope T6N R1E S18 NWNW	HILLS	3900	GRAVEL	Low Cover LATR-AMDU	DIST-MILLING, OHV	10

3 adult Live DT found entrapped in 8 foot deep mine hole on slope; — Egan

4 DT burrows (Active) located on transect - rock crevice burrows rather than sand

2 DT scat. CS=3 (M) ADE=20-50 DT/SQ MI — Egan-Kalish DT Reser

(5)	6/94	(0.5 mi)	T7N R1W S2 SESE	VALLEY	3370	GRAVEL/SAND	MOD COVER LATR-AMDU	DIST-OHV, CATTL 3,8	1-5

3 adult DT observed within a 0.5 mi stretch of pipeline road. — Egan

CS=3 (M) ADE=20-50 DT/SQ MI — PRE JSR TOUR W/ HENRI BISSO

(6)	6/92	(1 mi)	T8N R1E S2 NESW	WASH	2800	CALICHE GRAVEL/ROCK	LOW COVER LATR/AMDU	DIST-CATTLE MILLING DUMPS 3,8	1-

3 active DT Burrows, 2 Adult Live DT, CS=2 (M) ADE=20-50 DT/SQ MI — AT OLD DALLETT DUMP → Grand Slam Mining Claim — Ega

? ID	DATE	Length or # TRANSECT	LEGAL	GEO	ELEV	SUBSTRATE	VEG	HAB COND	SLOPE
7	2/94	1 mi	T8NR1E S25 W/4 Wash		2900	GRAVEL, ROCK	LATR-AMOU	GOOD (No Disturbance)	1-5%

Relocated 4 Live Adult DT from Barstow Vet Home Construction Site Arnold/Egan

H — CS=4 — ADE = 50-100 DT/SQ MI

3	2/96	(0.5 mi)	T8NR1E S19 NW SE	WASH	3300	GRAVEL/SAND	LATR/AMOU	DIST-OHV, CATTLE	1-5%

Relocated 3 Live Adult DT from '96 Poaching. H — CS=5 — ADE = 50-100 DT/SQ MI

5 inactive DT burrows located; 3 of which the relocated animals were placed in. End Tom Egan sightings/transects, Begin Ed LaRue transect locations. Egan/Bridges

1	7/26-28/94	(60ft width 1 mi)	T2NR2E S33 Ctr to S29			½ WASH ½ BAJADA	LATR-AMOU to LATR-YUSC	DIST-OHV 0-5%	

JSR DT SURVEY 94-LARUE 3500 ft avg elev.

2 DT Burrows

11 DT SCAT — CS=2 — M — ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI

2	7/26-28/94	(60ft width 1 mi)	T2NR2E S29 to S19, thru S26			HILLS	LATR-YUSC		5%

JSR DT SURVEY 94-LARUE 3700 ft avg elev.

2 DT Burrows

24 DT SCAT — CS=2 — M — ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI

3	7/26-28/94	(60ft width 1 mi)	T2NR2E S19 to S13, thru S18			HILLS	LATR-YUSC		5-7%

JSR DT SURVEY 94-LARUE 4300 ft avg elev.

1 DT Burrow

19 DT SCAT — CS=2 — M — ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI

4	7/26-28/94	(60ft width 1 mi)	T2NR2E S13 to T2NR1E S2, thru S13			HILLS	LATR-YUSC		5%

JSR DT SURVEY 94-LARUE 4080 ft avg elev.

2 DT Burrows

12 DT SCAT — CS=2 — M — ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI

PID	DATE	LENGTH OR # TRANSECT	LEGAL	ELEV.	VEG	SLOPE
-5	7/26-28/94	(60 ft width / 1 mi)	T6NR1E S2 to S2	4000	LATR-YUSC	5-7%

1 DT SCAT — HILLS
1 DT CARCASS. CS=1 M — ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 — LARUE

-6	7/26-28/94	(60 ft width / 1 mi)	T6NR1E S2 to S3	3940	LATR-YUSC	5-7%

1 DT SCAT. CS=1 M — BAJADA — ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI
JSR SURVEY DT 94 - LARUE

-7	7/26-28/94	(60 ft width / 1 mi)	T6NR1E S3 to S34	4060	LATR-YUSC	5%

1 DT SCAT. CS=1 M — BAJADA — ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

-8	7/26-28/94	(60 ft width / 1 mi)	T6NR1E S34 to S27	4400	LATR-YUSC	5-7%

NO DT SIGN. CS=0 L — HILLS — ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

-9	7/26-28/94	(60 ft width / 1 mi)	T6NR1E S27 to S28	4400	LATR-YUSC	1-5%

2 DT SCAT. CS=1 M — HILLS — ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

-10	7/26-28/94	(60 ft width / 1 mi)	T6NR1E S28 to S21	4000	LATR-AMDU	5%

NO DT SIGN. CS=0 L — HILL — ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

-11	7/26-28/94	(60 ft width / 1 mi)	T6NR1E S21 to S20	3980	LATR-AMDU	1-5%

NO DT SIGN. CS=0 L — HILLS — ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

MAP ID | DATE | LENGTH OR # TRANSECT | LEGAL | ELEV | VEG | SLOPE

(L12) 7/26-28/94 30 ft on each side of route width = 60' width 1 mi TGNRIES20 to SIT 3760 LATR-AMDU 1-5%.
No DT sign. CS=0 L HILLS ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

(L13) 7/26-28/94 (60 ft width 1 mi) TGNRIES17 to S7 3680 LATR-AMDU 1-5%.
No DT sign. CS=0 L BAJADA ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

(L14) 7/26-28/94 (60 ft width 1 mi) TGNRIES7 to TGNIES7 3560 LATR-AMDU 1-5%.
2 DT SCAT. CS=1 M BAJADA ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

(L15) 7/26-28/94 (60 ft width 1 mi) TGNRIES7 to TGNRIWS12 3480 LATR-AMDU 1-5%
No DT sign. CS=0 L BAJADA ADE = 0-20 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

(L16) 7/26-28/94 (60 ft width 1 mi) TGNRIWS12 to S2 3290 LATR-AMDU 1-5%
2 DT Burrows VALLEY
4 DT SCAT. CS= 1 ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 M LARUE

(L17) 7/26-28/94 (60 ft width 1 mi) TGNRIWS2 to S3 3160 LATR-AMDU 1-5%
1 DT SCAT. CS=1 M VALLEY ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

(L18) 7/26-28/94 (60 ft width 1 mi) TGNRIWS3 to S4 3050 LATR-AMDU 1-5%
2 DT SCAT. CS=1 M VALLEY ADE = 20-50 DT/SQ MI
JSR DT SURVEY 94 - LARUE

Abbreviations:

GEO = Geological Landform

ELEV = Elevation, in feet

VEG = Vegetative community using standard species range codes ie., LATR = Larrea tridentata; YUSC = Yucca schidigera; AMDU = Ambrosia dumosa.

HABITAT COND = Cursory habitat condition notes on human disturbance (dist) factors. Numerical coding per Berry (1984) Data Sheet Instructions.

CS = Corrected Sign, based on Berry (1984) Corrected Sign Instructions.

ADE = Absolute density estimate for desert tortoises per Berry (1984);

L, M, H = Low, Moderate and High desert tortoise densities, relating to Low = 0-20 tortoises per sq. mile; Moderate = 20-50 tortoises per sq. mile and High = 50+ tortoises per sq. mile.

DTEZ = Desert Tortoise Emphasis Zone, further defined by H (High), M (Moderate) and L (Low) Desert Tortoise Quality of Habitat (see text)

NDTEZ = Non-Desert Tortoise Emphasis Zone; areas where suitable tortoise habitat may be present, but for the purposes of route designation, such areas have been determined non-emphasis areas

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APPENDIX II

RECREATION CRITERIA FOR ROUTE DESIGNATION

Recreation Criteria

A sub-group of the Technical Review Team for the Ord/Rodman Pilot met on Monday, November 13, 1995, 7:00 -10:00 pm at the Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District office, in Riverside, California. The following members were present.

BLM Staff	Representatives
Brad Blomquist	Dana Bell
John Butz	Mike Ahrens
Steve Bonar	Marie Brashear
Alan Stein	Paul Slavic
	Jerry Counts

The group discussed the objectives of the Ord Pilot and of the Recreation subgroup. The objectives of the subgroup were to develop recreation-based criteria to assist in designating routes in the Ord/Rodman Pilot area. As the discussion progressed, it became obvious that there were two important categories of criteria for what was important to recreation users; what makes a route a good route, and what makes a network of routes. The criteria had many similarities on a different scale.

The group recognized that each type of recreation user may see different aspects of a route as being desirable or undesirable. These were referred to as attributes.

The group also recognized that certain attributes of a route network were desirable from the standpoint of what makes a good transportation network. Some of these attributes may be similar to those that make up a good network of recreation routes, but a transportation network would have its own needs (e.g., sufficient number of paved roads capable of handling larger numbers of vehicles or vehicles with heavier loads).

Recreation-based attributes of both routes and a route network were identified. The elements below each attribute reflects the discussion that took place in developing the attribute.

Route Attributes

Destination

- from place to place
- to a place (e.g., Slash X)

Topography - Terrain

- the type of topography the route traverses; this is associated with the type of experience one gets from traversing the route

Length - Time of Opportunity

- length of the route
- length of time the route will take to traverse

Scenic - Natural Value

- the type of scenic value one gets from travelling on the route

Point of Interest

- points of interest to which the route provides access (e.g., special area, historic site)

Alignment - Linkage (Access) Opportunity

- route provides access between one area and another
- route provides access between route systems
- route provides only east/west or north/south access within an area for a vehicle type, eliminating the need for long the need for long drive-around times
- route provides access to camping area
- route provides access to staging area
- route is a connecting route, a loop route

Historic Value

- the route itself has historic value

Technical Level of Difficulty

- the route provides an opportunity to experience a route with a certain level of difficulty fora particular type of vehicle

Natural Stability - Maintainability

- does route maintain itself; or require maintenance?
- does route wash out frequently?

Primitive Nature - Feeling of Exploration

- does route provide an opportunity to "get away from it all and feel as if you are in an unvisited area?

Seasonal Quality - Opportunity

- hunting
- seasonal Closure
- "Good" Weather Route
- wildflower displays
- wildlife

Technical Levels of Difficulty Opportunities

- system provides opportunities for all levels of difficulty to be experienced in the area

Variety of Vehicle Type Opportunities

- route system provides an opportunity for all types of vehicles to have routes appropriate for their use and type of recreation

Retains Primitive Nature - Feeling of Exploration

- route system continues to maintain a feeling of being primitive in nature; e.g., the only route in an area is not adjacent to and parallel with a paved road

Seasonal Opportunities

- system provides opportunities to use routes within the system at a time when other areas are not heavily used (e.g., the desert areas may be more heavily used in the winter, while the higher elevations on Forest System lands are more heavily used in the summer)

APPENDIX III

DESERT WASHES,
MANAGING A FRAGILE RESOURCE
ON OUR
PUBLIC LANDS

DESERT WASHES

Managing A Fragile Resource On Our Public Lands

Text and photograph
by Steven L. Hartman

Educational Bulletin #98-3
A publication of the
Desert Protective Council, Inc.

Many animals are attracted to washes. The thorny canopy formed by cat's-claw is a favorite nesting site for birds, such as the verdin, while its lower branches shelter jackrabbits from their pursuers.
Humans are attracted to washes for hiking, hunting, bird-watching, rock-hounding and other forms of bipedal recreation. Washes are commonly used as vehicle routes, and camping in washes is a favorite human activity.
Livestock grazing and mining also impact washes.

During summer thunderstorms, the desert's normally dry arroyos, ravines, canyons and gullies can become raging torrents that quickly inundate wash channels. If cut into bedrock, shallow and steep channels have very little subsurface water flow. But large channels with deep sediments may have subsurface water movement even though surface flow is absent[1]. These subsurface flows are revealed by the presence of certain desert shrubs and trees that require such additional moisture for their survival. Seen from above, desert washes often appear as dark green ribbons in contrast to the surrounding lighter colored desert scrub.

DESERT WASH VEGETATION

Depending upon where you are in the Colorado or Mojave Deserts, the presence of one or more of the following plant species will typically indicate a wash channel:

Acacia greggii	cat's claw
Cercidium floridum	palo verde
Chilopsis linearis	desert-willow
Olneya tesota	ironwood
Prosopis glandulosa	mesquite
Psorothamnus spinosus	smoke-tree

Cat's claw is the most widespread desert wash species. Desert willow, mesquite and smoke-tree are found in both Mojave and Colorado deserts.

In 1986, Robert Holland[2] produced a vegetation list for California that included two desert wash communities:

Mojave Desert Wash Scrub

Acacia greggii
Ambrosia eriocentra
Artemisia ludoviciana
Atriplex spp.
Baccharis spp.
Baileya multiradiata var. multiradiata
Bebbia juncea var. aspera
Berberis haematocarpa
Brickellia incana
Chilopsis linearis ssp. arcuata
Chrysothamnus paniculatus
Cucurbita palmata
Ephedra californica
Forestiera pubescens
Isomeris arborea
Psorothamnus spinosus
Senna armata

Desert Dry Wash Woodland

Asclepias subulata
Baccharis sarothroides
Calliandra eriophylla
Cercidium floridum ssp. floridum
Condalia globosa var. pubescens
Hoffmannseggia glauca
Hymenoclea monogyra
Lycium andersonii
Psorothamnus spinosus
Senna armata
Ziziphus obtusifolia var. canescens

This desert dry wash community, or "microphyll" (micro = small, phyll = leaf) woodland is composed of palo verde, ironwood, and smoke-tree and considered a unique Colorado Sonoran Desert vegetation type (restricted to desert areas where freezing temperatures are relatively uncommon). Colorado Desert washes support numerous shrubs and one

more medium-sized 6–20 ft (2–6 m) tall, tree species usually not found in adjacent habitats[3].

Other common shrubs associated with all desert washes include:

Baccharis spp.	*Bebbia juncea*
Brickellia spp.	*Chrysothamnus* spp.
Hymenoclea salsola	*Hyptis emoryi*
Isomeris arborea	*Justicia californica*
Larrea tridentata	*Lycium andersonii*
Pluchea sericea	*Simmondsia chinensis*

Ephemeral vegetation occurs in desert washes as well, typically of the same species that occur in adjacent areas of desert scrub. Usually the same species of annuals attain greater stature growing in open sunny areas of the wash channel than they do in adjacent areas with a lower water supply.

Washlets (less than 2 meters wide) have a higher diversity of annuals in the Mojave Desert than the Colorado Desert, but washes (greater than 2 meters wide) have a higher diversity of annuals in the Colorado Desert. Both washes and washlets have intermittent water flows, but washlets don't have scouring which leads to sand and gravel deposition in washes.

RARE PLANTS

A few rare plants have distributions limited to desert washes. The white-margined beardstongue (*Penstemon albomarginatus*) is found in stable sandy washes. The only known locations of populations of the species in California occur along a five-mile stretch of wash habitat east of Barstow[4]. This attractive plant stands about twelve inches tall. Its leaves and bracts have membranous margins, hence its common name. It produces lovely white to pink or lavender colored flowers in early to mid-spring. It is a federal species of concern, and is recognized by the California Native Plant Society as a "1B" species, which indicates that this species is rare, threatened or endangered in California and elsewhere.

The Mojave monkeyflower (*Mimulus mohavensis*), another federal species of concern, has been documented to occur in desert washes within a grazing allotment, as well as in other wash locations. It also is recognized by the California Native Plant Society as a "1B" species. This delicate annual plant produces showy blossoms in magenta-purple with white margins.

An important species in eastern Imperial County is the daintily-flowered featherduster (*Calliandra eriophylla*), the greatest concentration of which is found along washes on the eastern side of the Chocolate Mountains. This species is recognized by the California Native Plant Society as a "2" species, which indicates that this species is rare, threatened or endangered in California but more common elsewhere. Occasionally, it is commercially available as a drought-resistant, native landscape plant due to its attractive habit.

THE ROLE OF FLASH FLOODS

There is no uniform distribution of plants in the wash channel. Due to the force of the infrequent flash floods, the majority of the trees and shrubs occur on the banks and on islands within the wash. Flash floods carry huge sediment loads and can move large rocks.

According to Vogl[9], plants such as the smoke-tree depend upon repeated flash floods for their renewal, stimulation and continuance. Smoke-tree does "not reproduce unless the seeds that have accumulated in the gravel beneath them are swept up by flood waters which abrade, wear down, crack and churn the hard-coated seeds in mixtures of sand, gravel, rock and water. As a result of this seed scarification, the seeds eventually imbibe water, are thoroughly soaked for germination, and are distributed to new locations within the scoured washes or newly-formed washes, and the seedbed is charged with the necessary water for successful seedling establishment. These same floodwaters often dislodge and destroy the parent plants. Other species that appear to benefit from floods are mesquite, cat's claw, ironwood, palo verde and desert willow[9]."

RAIN RUNOFF WATERS

An important function of desert washes is to facilitate the infiltration of rain runoff waters so they can penetrate the alluvium and reach the basin/valley aquifers, a function easily disrupted by man-made channelization. This is especially important in eastern Imperial County: the runoff from the Chocolate Mountains flows to the west, where it is eventually trapped and stored beneath the Algodones (also known as the Imperial or Glamis) sand dunes. This aquifer supports the largest microphyll woodland in the State.

Since tree species are often restricted to landscape positions that collect runoff during brief intense rains, it is no surprise that they occur in thin ribbons of green along desert washes. While soil moisture storage in washes is often excellent, significant recharge, however, may occur only during a rare flood event. A long-term monitoring project in a desert wash near Palm Desert[5] revealed that a low intensity 2 cm rain wetted the soil only to a depth of 1 meter, while the flow from an intense storm (22 cm) produced a flood in the wash that recharged the soil to a depth greater than 7 meters.

UTILIZATION BY WILDLIFE

Healthy desert washes are vital components of the desert ecosystem. "Their trees and shrubs are crucial as sources of food, shade and shelter for many birds and other animals and for nesting sites for resident desert birds. They are way stations for migrant birds. Their banks are extensively used by burrowing invertebrates, reptiles and mammals. The high water table no doubt provides moist underground incubation sites for invertebrate and reptile eggs and is sought by digging coyotes, foxes and other larger mammals[6]." Mule deer utilize desert washes for fawning areas and as movement corridors for seasonal migration and daily foraging.

The total area occupied by washes is relatively small compared to the vast expanse of the desert scrub vegetation[3], yet there is an abundance of wildlife that indicates the importance of desert washes. The endangered desert tortoise burrows in wash sides, and uses washlets as foraging corridors[7]. Badgers make their dens in washes. As many as 250 species of birds have been identified in desert washes. Neotropical birds, especially verdin, gnatcatcher, loggerhead shrike, and the phainopepla, utilize desert washes as nesting areas. There are approximately 50% more breeding bird species and about twice as many wintering bird species in washes than in desert scrub[3].

RESOURCE SENSITIVITY

With the advent of the mining of gold with heap-leach technology, desert wash systems on public lands are being disturbed, re-routed, and in some cases, destroyed. This portends to be a significant issue in eastern Imperial County.

Livestock utilize washes for travel corridors and cause severe soil compaction and disturbance around springs and water sources. Cattle damage shrubs and trees (such as desert-willow) by breaking branches when they try to find shade beneath the taller canopy of these wash indicator species.

Desert washes are also subject to heavy recreational use by campers and off-highway vehicle enthusiasts, both activities that can cause considerable disturbance to plants and wildlife and can lead to habitat degradation. Because routes of travel are often hard to discern in washes, off-highway vehicles that stray from the wash bottom can break down wash banks, resulting in destroyed animal burrows and crushed or destroyed vegetation. Vehicles may frighten away timid, often desert-stressed wildlife and disrupt the nesting of birds. 90% fewer birds were found in a wash used by vehicles in the Colorado Desert compared with an undisturbed wash nearby[3]. Excessive vehicle use is thought to accelerate evaporation of water from the wash bottom, and perhaps disrupt the microbial organisms that inhabit the wash bottom sands and soils.

A desert wash may withstand some vehicle travel without bank destabilization if travel is in the interior of scoured area. But disturbance to washlets causes loss of topsoil, and washlets are prone to downcutting of steeper-profile sides and bank destabilization if disturbed, with subsequent erosion. Cumulative long-term impacts include loss of water-storage capacity of soil and permeability due to soil compaction, and disturbance can lead to the creation of a suitable seed bed for exotic plant species.

Sounds of dune buggies and motorcycles are known to cause deafness in animals and interfere with their ability to survive in the harsh and competitive desert environment[8]. In particular, Couch's spadefoot toad (*Scaphiopus couchi*) is sensitive to noises, since the sound of thunder can cause them to emerge from their underground burrows. Experiments have demonstrated that motorcycle noise of 95 dBA played to them from a recording caused them to slowly crawl to the surface. Since OHV activity takes place during the cooler periods of the year when there would not be moisture available on the surface due to summer thunderstorms, if these toads did emerge due to a similar noise cue, the toads would find conditions unsuitable and even life-threatening.

VEHICLE USE IN WASHES

One of the sayings that I've heard is that "it is O.K. to drive in desert washes because they get disturbed by flash floods anyway." Vogl[9] states that "Desert washes are unfit places for permanent structures but can usually survive and recover from reasonable (light to moderate use) impacts of motorized vehicles." Even Stebbins[6] admits that "occasional vehicles on course along a wash bottom are tolerable..." However, vehicle traffic and floods are very different types of disturbances. One involves water and moving large amounts of sediments with water for long distances, often followed by weeks or months or years of recovery. Repeated or constant disturbance by vehicles moves sediment within a smaller space, doesn't deposit that sediment with water, involves noise, and compacts soil/sediments which floods do not. Intermittent disturbance with water is very different from constant disturbance without water.

CURRENT REGULATIONS

The public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) are designated with multiple use classes which include closed, open, and limited class L and M. According to the Desert Plan[10] "limited" designated vehicle access means that motorized-vehicle access is only allowed on certain "routes of travel," which include roads, ways, trails, and washes.

> Vehicle access using desert washes will be governed by the designation for the area in which the wash is located. In areas designated "closed," vehicle access in desert washes will be prohibited. In areas designated "open," vehicle access in desert washes will be permitted. In all "limited" areas, vehicle use in desert washes will be restricted to "existing" (Class M) or "approved" (Class L) vehicle routes of travel.

Much of the controversy about desert washes derives from the ambiguous definitions presented in the 1980 Desert Plan, in which "existing routes of travel" were defined as "all routes established before December 31, 1978 (the date of full aerial photo coverage of the CDCA)", and its subsequent 1982 amendment:

> An existing route of travel is a route established before approval of the Desert Plan in 1980, with a minimum width of two feet, showing significant surface evidence of prior vehicle use or, for washes, history of prior use.

The "history of prior" use definition of a wash creates an impossible situation for the BLM Rangers. Without a inventory to document locations of such washes, anyone driving on a wash with vehicle tracks could claim that those tracks were evidence of prior use, even if the tracks were made the day before! To address this untenable situation, the BLM embarked on a route designation project, in which Geographic Information Systems technology has been

"Washes are not, as some people think, places little affected by vehicle travel." Robert C. Stebbins[6]

employed to map every route, and to determine which routes should be available for vehicle use. Also, rules for "stopping and parking and/or camping," which have fluctuated from being "limited to 100 feet of the route" to 300 feet as amended in 1982, will be addressed in context of special management areas for the protection of the endangered desert tortoise and other rare species. Both route designations and revised rules for vehicle use will be implemented by way of regional ecosystem plans that are now being prepared. Members of the public wishing for increased protection for desert washes need to express their views to the BLM, as the closing of desert washes is a controversial issue.

GUIDELINES FOR DESERT WASH CONSERVATION

The primary problem that needs to be addressed is that on our public lands, nearly every desert wash that is wide enough to drive a vehicle through has evidence of vehicle use. The BLM needs to increase enforcement where desert washes are closed to vehicle use, and expand this protection to include types of desert washes that are currently not sufficiently protected. The following guidelines are recommended to the Bureau of Land Management for conserving desert washes in the California Desert Conservation Area:

1. Identify the locations of largest desert wash types and rank them based on:
   - number of species present,
   - total acreage,
   - watershed values,
   - historic and current disturbance levels,
   - presence of springs or other riparian areas,
   - presence of livestock grazing,
   - presence of rare plants and animals,
   - presence and infestation level of non-native plants,
   - health/diversity of native plant communities
   - importance as wildlife corridors,
   - importance of existing vehicle routes, and
   - land ownership.

2. Attempt to fully protect at least one wash system of each dominant vegetation type within each watershed, if possible, or at the next largest "ecological" scale, at least.
3. Where closing a desert wash to vehicle use is impossible, consider seasonal closures and limit stopping/parking and camping to designated sites.
4. Actively monitor the introduction and spread of non-native species, especially tamarisk (*Tamarix* spp.), and *Brassica tournefortii*, and develop a control strategy that would identify and target for protection desert washes that have not been invaded by either of those two species.

CONCLUSION

The overuse of desert washes by vehicles, and in places, by livestock, leads to:

- a diminishment of community structure (that is, the amount of cover by trees and shrubs),
- elimination of native species which cannot tolerate soil compaction and crushing, and
- an overall reduction in the abundance and diversity of mammals, birds, amphibians, and insects.

The challenge for the agencies managing our public lands will be to create a route system for vehicle travel that will provide adequate access while still maintaining areas where desert washes are allowed to function without disturbance that impairs the natural biological processes.

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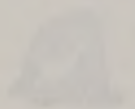
APPENDIX IV

ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITING,
TENDENCIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRACKS
IN
OPEN AREAS



ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITING

Tendencies in the Development of Tracks in Open Areas

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ABSTRACT / The study aimed to compare the rate of vehicle and pedestrian track development between an unprotected open area and a protected one during the last 50 years. The results indicate that: (1) the rate of change in the length of tracks per 1 square kilometer of a site has been four times greater in the unprotected area than in the protected area; (2) the number of *area cells* (the areas between the tracks) increased geometrically in the unprotected area, while the increase in the protected area was linear; and (3) most area cells (50%–70%) in the protected area in each of the years analyzed (except 1944) were smaller than 10 ha in size. However, an area cell greater than 100 ha has always been observed. In contrast, in the unprotected site the number of area cells increased with time while their area size decreased. Twenty-seven percent of the unprotected area is composed at present of area cells smaller in size than 1 ha. The development of a track system in the protected site changed moderately with a few peaks during the past 50 years. This trend is a result of land management policies that actively promote sustainable ecotourism. However, in the unprotected open area, the track system has changed continuously and drastically due to a lack of land conservation management.

A track system is the outcome of human activity in a landscape. The track system of protected areas, such as nature reserves and national parks, is usually meant for visitor use. This track system is also usually used by managers for organization, control, and observation purposes. The more protected the area is, the fewer the tracks, especially for vehicles. Tours are usually based on pedestrian tracks. The track system in these areas is controlled and supervised, and quite often managers attempt to close off and rehabilitate old tracks that are no longer needed or to change their location in order to promote conservation issues (Goldsmith 1983, Cubit and McArthur 1995).

Other open areas, such as agricultural fields and unprotected natural landscapes, do not have a planned track system. The tracks develop there spontaneously, according the needs and degree of use. Off-road vehicles (sport utility vehicles, SUV), which can pass almost all obstacles, have been in use for over 30 years, especially among farmers and the military. This has brought about a creation of new routes. In recent years, the number and variety of SUV has grown as prices have fallen. Along with the significant rise in ecotourism in Western society, this increased change has caused growing pressure on natural open areas.

Many studies have described in detail the impact of trampling on vegetation and soil and the resulting geomorphologic processes such as overland flow and soil erosion (Adkison and Jackson 1996, Boucher and others 1991, Cole 1986, 1988, 1995a,b, Cole and Marion 1988, Goldsmith 1983, Kuss 1986). However, the local influence that a track system may have is extended by irreversible temporal and long-term spatial impacts. A track system may cause habitat fragmentation, i.e., lack of communication between individuals in a population or between species. This causes a rise in the ecological system's sensitivity and may lead to its deterioration (Reed and Dobson 1993, Rosenzweig 1995).

The present study aims to assess the rate of vehicle and pedestrian track development in a protected open area and in unprotected one over the last 50 years. A comparison between these two types is followed by a description of the factors that cause the track systems development and a discussion of their ecological implications.

The development of tracks in open areas is an interesting and significant issue. We have not found any research that deals directly with this subject. Therefore, this may be considered a pioneer study of the matter.

Studies of track growth and impact on a landscape may serve as a basis for the development of supervision and management as well as rehabilitation strategies for these areas. The strategies aim to decrease environmental and social impacts. There is no Israeli policy for track management and planning, despite the immediate need that open area managers encounter. In order to develop a track management operation, one must study development tendencies, causes of development, the nature of human influence, and how this influence

KEY WORDS: Track development; Protected open areas; Unprotected open areas

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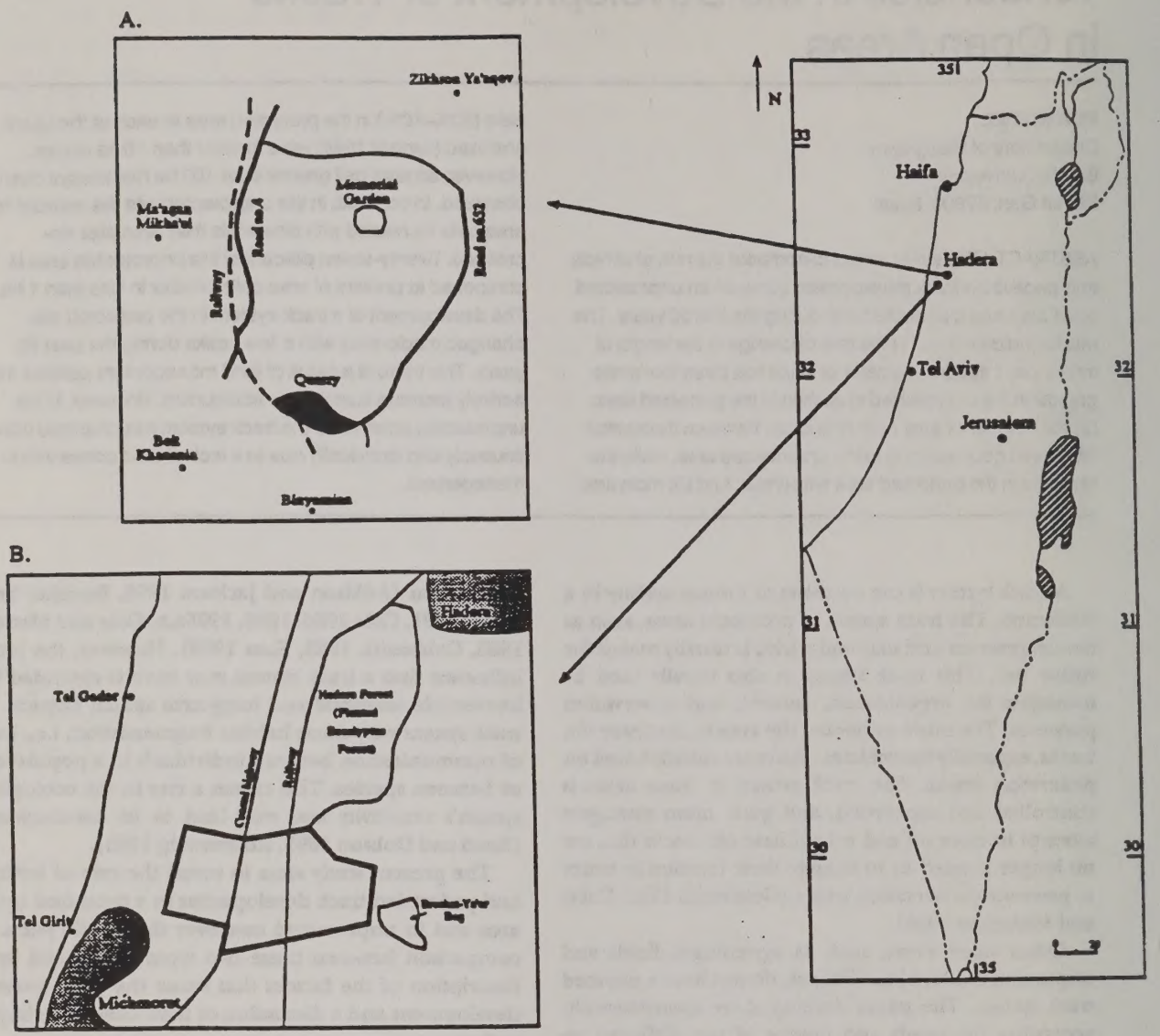

Figure 1. The research sites: (A) Ramat Hanadiv, the protected site; (B) Sharon Park, the unprotected site.

contradicts the declared and practical goals of open areas.

Research Sites

The study was conducted in two sites about 5 km apart on a straight line. Both sites, about 450 ha each, are located in the part of Israel having a Mediterranean climate. The mean annual rainfall is 500–600 mm and mean temperature is 19–21°C (The New Israeli Atlas 1995). The protected site, Ramat Hanadiv Park, is managed and supervised by the Society for the Protection of Nature, while the unprotected one, Sharon Park, is unsupervised and open to a large variety of activities such as grazing, agriculture, and tourism.

The protected Ramat Hanadiv Park extends from the town of Zikhron Ya'akov in the north to the lowlands of the local council of Binyamina in the south. The western slopes of the Lower Mount Carmel range border the site on the west, and Road 652 is its eastern border (Figure 1A).

The site is the southernmost spur of Mount Carmel and is cut across by the axial anticline of the Lower Carmel from north to south. The calcareous rocks are mostly Cenomanian-Turonian. The soil is Terra Rossa, a low-calcium clay type found mainly in rockbeds at a

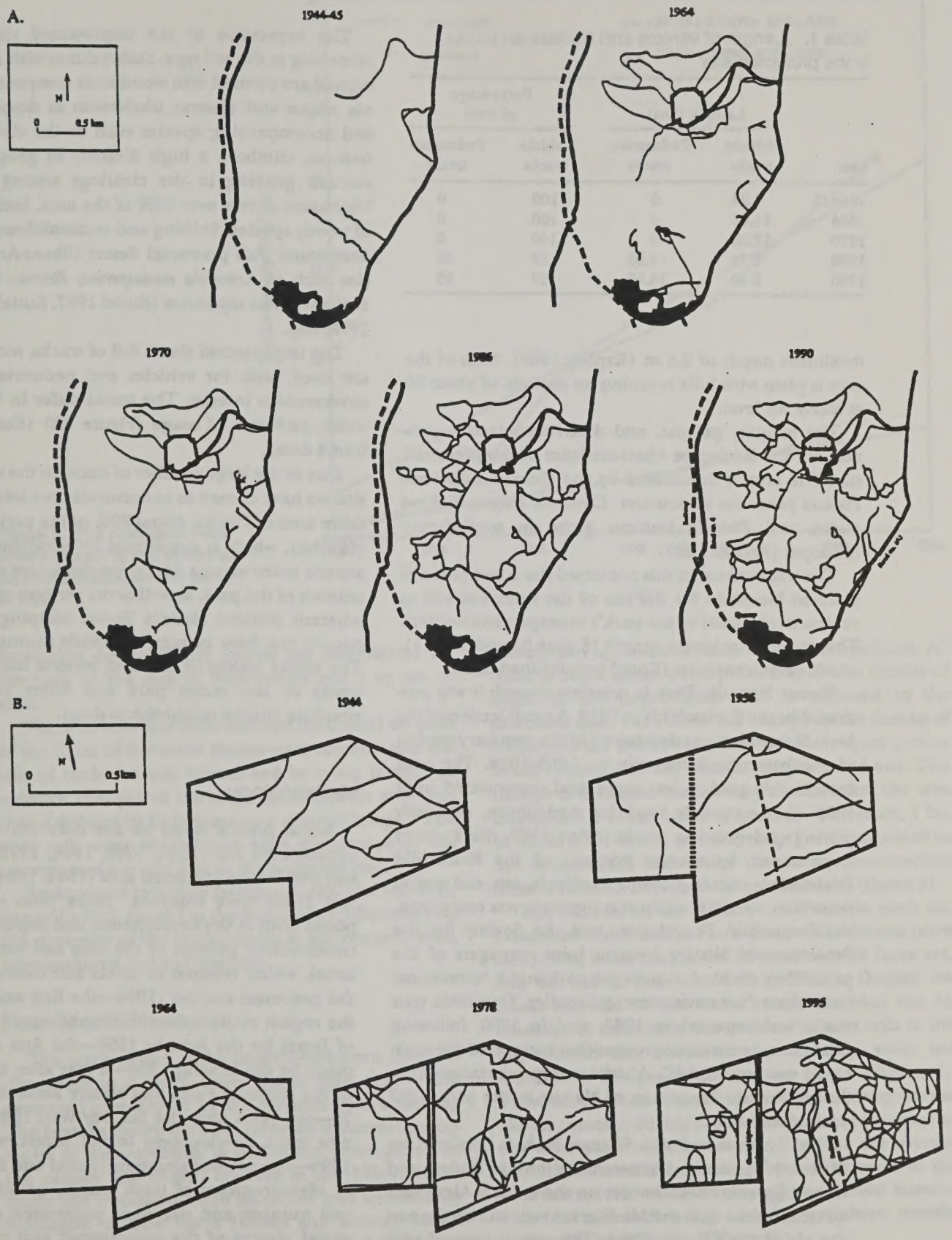

Figure 2. The development of the track system in the protected site (A) and in the unprotected site (B) in the past 50 years (1956, double interrupted line: the beginning of the coastal road construction; 1964, single continuous line: the coastal road with one lane; 1978 and 1995, double continuous lines: the coastal road with two lanes).

Table 1. Length of vehicle and pedestrian tracks in the protected site

Year	Length (km)		Percentage of total	
	Vehicle tracks	Pedestrian tracks	Vehicle tracks	Pedestrian tracks
1944/5	4.84	0	100	0
1964	11.03	0	100	0
1970	12.30	0	100	0
1986	6.74	14.50	32	68
1990	8.40	14.50	37	63

maximum depth of 0.5 m (Kaplan 1989). Most of the area is plain with hills reaching an altitude of about 80 m above sea level.

The maquis, garigue, and dwarf-shrubland vegetation are the landscape characteristics of the protected site. The area is dominated by the *Quercus calliprinos–Pistacia palaestina* association. *Ceratonia siliqua, Phillyrea media,* and *Pistacia lentiscus* grow on south-facing hillslopes (Kaplan 1989).

The track system in this protected site is composed of planned footpaths for the use of the visitors as well as vehicle tracks, used by the park's managers and workers. The tracks differ in age, length (Figure 2A and Table 1), width, and visitor load (Kutiel unpublished data).

Ramat Hanadiv Park is privately owned; it was purchased by the Rothschilds in 1913. A small section of the park, about 7 ha, was developed as the cemetery garden of the baron and his wife in 1953–1954. The area around this garden was open and unprotected until 1967 and was partly used for agriculture, especially grazing and growing wheat. After 1967, the Forestry Department, by mutual consent of the Rothschild Foundation, started planting conifer forests, and several years later, in 1984, when this program was completed, the Rothschild Foundation and the Society for the Protection of Nature became joint managers of the park. They decided to turn the park into a recreational natural area for environmental studies. Four main tour tracks were opened in 1986, and in 1990, following tourists' requests, more routes that connected the main tracks were opened (G. Abraham, representative of the Society for the Protection of Nature in the park, 1997 oral information).

The unprotected site, Sharon Park, is bordered on the north by the road between the town of Hadera and Givat Olga suburb. Its border on the south is Alexander Stream, on the west the Mediterranean, and on the east the old Haifa Tel-Aviv Road. The area is covered with sand dunes characteristic of the coastal plain of Israel (Figure 1B) (Dan and Kutiel 1997).

The vegetation of the unprotected site changes according to the soil type. Stable dunes with dark, sandy regosol are covered with woodlands composed of *Ceratonia siliqua* and *Quercus ithaburensis* as dominant trees and accompanying species such as the shrub *Pistacia lentiscus*, climbers, a high diversity of geophytes, and annuals growing in the clearings among the trees. Vegetation covers over 80% of the area, including 20% of woody species. Shifting and semistabilized dunes are dominated with perennial desert (Sharo-Arabian) species such as *Artemisia monosperma, Retama raetam,* and *Heilianthemum stipulatum* (Kutiel 1997, Kutiel and others 1979/80).

The unprotected site is full of tracks, most of which are used both for vehicles and pedestrians. Vehicle movement is intense. The tracks differ in length, age, width, and rate of usage (Figure 2B) (Kutiel, unpublished data).

Due to the large number of tracks in the unprotected site, we have chosen to concentrate on a small representative area of 105 ha, about 20% of the park's total area (605 ha), which is dominated by woodland. This area attracts many visitors who enjoy the scenery, plants, and animals of the park, as well as the services offered by the adjacent planted Hadera Forest camping site, where people can have picnics, especially during the spring. The tracks system in the area reflects the status of all tracks in the entire park and other areas on the coastline (Kutiel unpublished data).

Methodology

Aerial photos taken on five different dates for the unprotected site (1944, 1956, 1964, 1978, and 1995), and five for the protected area (1944, 1964, 1970, 1986, and 1990) were analyzed. These years were turning points both in the development and implementation of conservation policies in the sites and for the State of Israel, which resulted in direct and indirect effects on the processes studied (1944—the first aerial photos of the region made before the establishment of the State of Israel by the British; 1956—the first aerial photos made by the Israelis; 1964—a year after the legislation of the National Parks and Nature Reserves Law; 1970/78—the years after the Six Day War; 1986 and 1990—new track development in the protected open area; 1995—the present situation (Kutiel and Sharon 1996).

Measurements of track length, densities, and area cell number and size were performed on the scaled aerial photos of the unprotected and protected sites (1:10,000 and 1:15,000, respectively). The total lengths of the tracks were measured by using an electronic

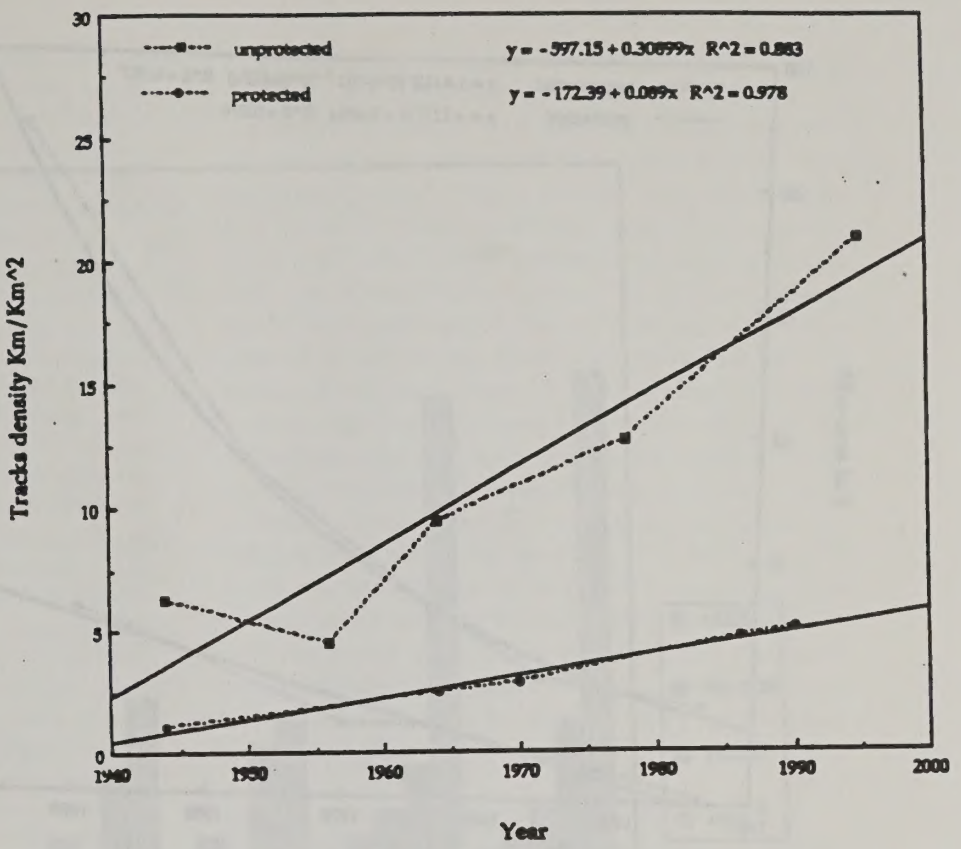

Figure 3. The changes in track density (length in km/sq km) in the research sites over the past 50 years.

measuring device. Tracks density was determined on the basis of the sum of track length per 1 sq km of area.

The area cells (the areas between the tracks) on each of the dates of the aerial photos were counted and the size of each cell was determined by using Image-Pro software (Image-Pro calculates the size of an area unit that is defined by its borders on a scanned image). The area cells were divided into nine size groups in the unprotected site and four in the protected one.

Background materials (articles, books, and surveys), parts of which related to the factors that influenced on the dynamics of the track systems in the research sites, were gathered and summarized.

Results and Discussion

The track system of the unprotected open area has diversified to a much larger extent than that of the protected area. Figure 2A and B illustrates this finding. The reasons derive from the relatively moderate topography of the woodland, as well as the development of the railway and coastal highway in the 1950s. These made the woodland more accessible and speeded up formation of new tracks (Kutiel and Sharon 1996). Another factor that has affected the track system is the existence of agricultural fields within the woodland. All these brought about a sharp increase in the density of tracks in the unprotected site, as opposed to the protected one. The rate of the change in the density of tracks over the last 50 years has been four times greater in the unprotected site than in the protected one. This change is immense considering the fact that the area considered is rather small (Figure 3). Therefore, 1 km of tracks per 1 sq km on an average has been added in the unprotected site while the same phenomenon occurred once in 12 years in the protected site (Figure 3).

The increase in the number of tracks in each site caused the division of the area into small subareas (area cells). The more tracks, the more area cells there are, and the size of each area cell decreases. Despite the linear increase in the tracks' density, which can be observed in both sites, the number of area cells in the unprotected site increased geometrically, while the increase in the protected site was linear (Figure 4). Thus, the addition of area cells in the protected site was almost constant during the last 50 years—an average of one area cell every 20 months. However, the average addition of area cells during the last 50 years in the unprotected site was one area cell every seven months, with one area cell being added every three months during the last 18 years (Figure 4).

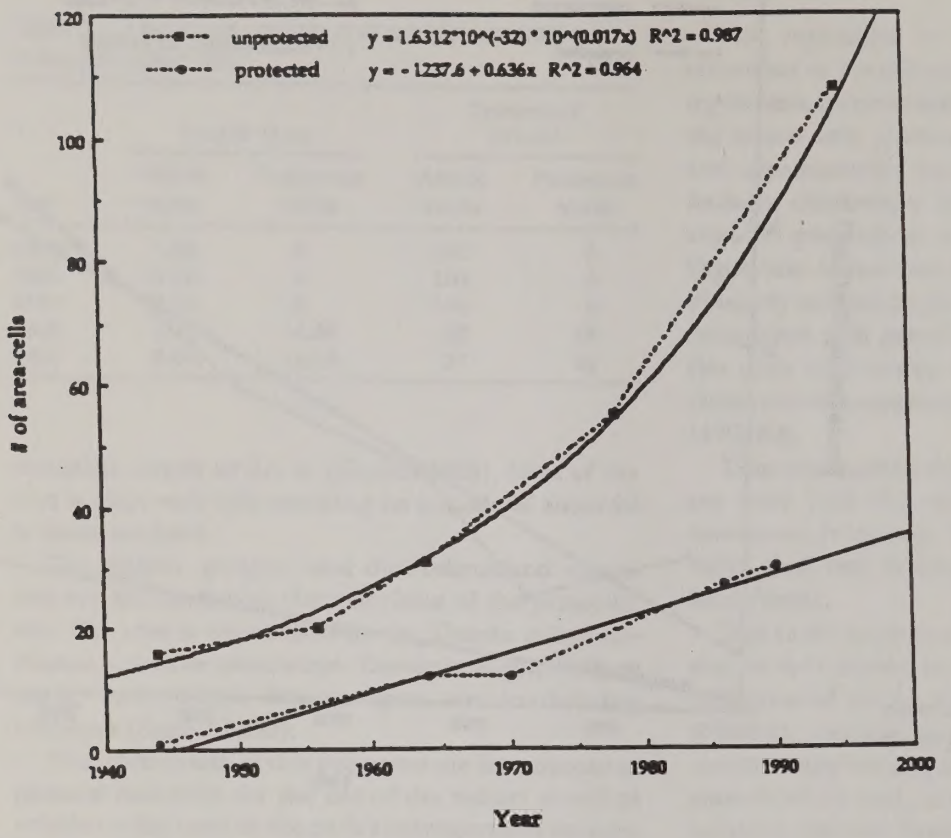

Figure 4. Changes in the number of area cells in the protected and in the unprotected sites in the past 50 years.

Most area cells (50%–70%) of the protected site in each analyzed year (except 1944) were smaller in size than 10 ha, whereas an area cell greater than 100 ha has always existed (Figure 5A). Here one can clearly see the three most significant points in time that influenced the development of the track system in the site, and therefore, the size of the area cells: in 1944, most of the site was wild and unmanaged. It was an integral part of the entire region when considering the ecological features. In 1964 the site was managed by the Forestry Department. The latter was interested in afforestation of the clear areas in the park. Tracks were created, which caused fragmentation of the site into small area cells of less than 50 ha. The situation remained the same in 1970. The next change took place in 1986, two years after the Society for the Protection of Nature had taken over. The society's goal was to cooperate with the owners of the site and turn it into an open field school and environmental study center. They opened new pedestrian tour tracks (Table 1). Again the area cells became significantly smaller, some as small as 10 ha. The situation has remained stable since 1990, and, in fact, is the same today (Figure 5A). In contrast, in the woodland of the unprotected park, the number of area cells has increased while their area has become smaller at every point in time (Figure 5B). The area cells smaller than 1 ha, for instance, have increased significantly: until 1964 they amounted to about 2% of the total area of the woodland, while in 1995 they equaled 27%, an increase of 13.5-fold during 50 years (Figure 5B).

This study quantitatively described the development of the track system and the "islands" among them during the last 50 years in two open areas, one protected and formally managed, the other unprotected and uncontrolled. The track system in the protected site changed moderately, and had a few peaks, which reflected the individual policies of the land managers. In the unprotected open area, the track system has changed continuously and drastically due to the lack of conservation management.

Sharon Park is an example of numerous natural unprotected open areas in Israel as well as in the rest of the world. Areas that are adjacent to the coastlines, where the population is dense, are particularly sensitive to disturbances due to the relatively harsh conditions that prevail. These conditions cause the slow rehabilitation rate of plants and animals that live there (Reed and Dobson 1993).

There is great ecological concern with track systems in open areas. They can cause localized and spatial environmental changes. The magnitude of change is related to the visitor load, the areal extent of use, the

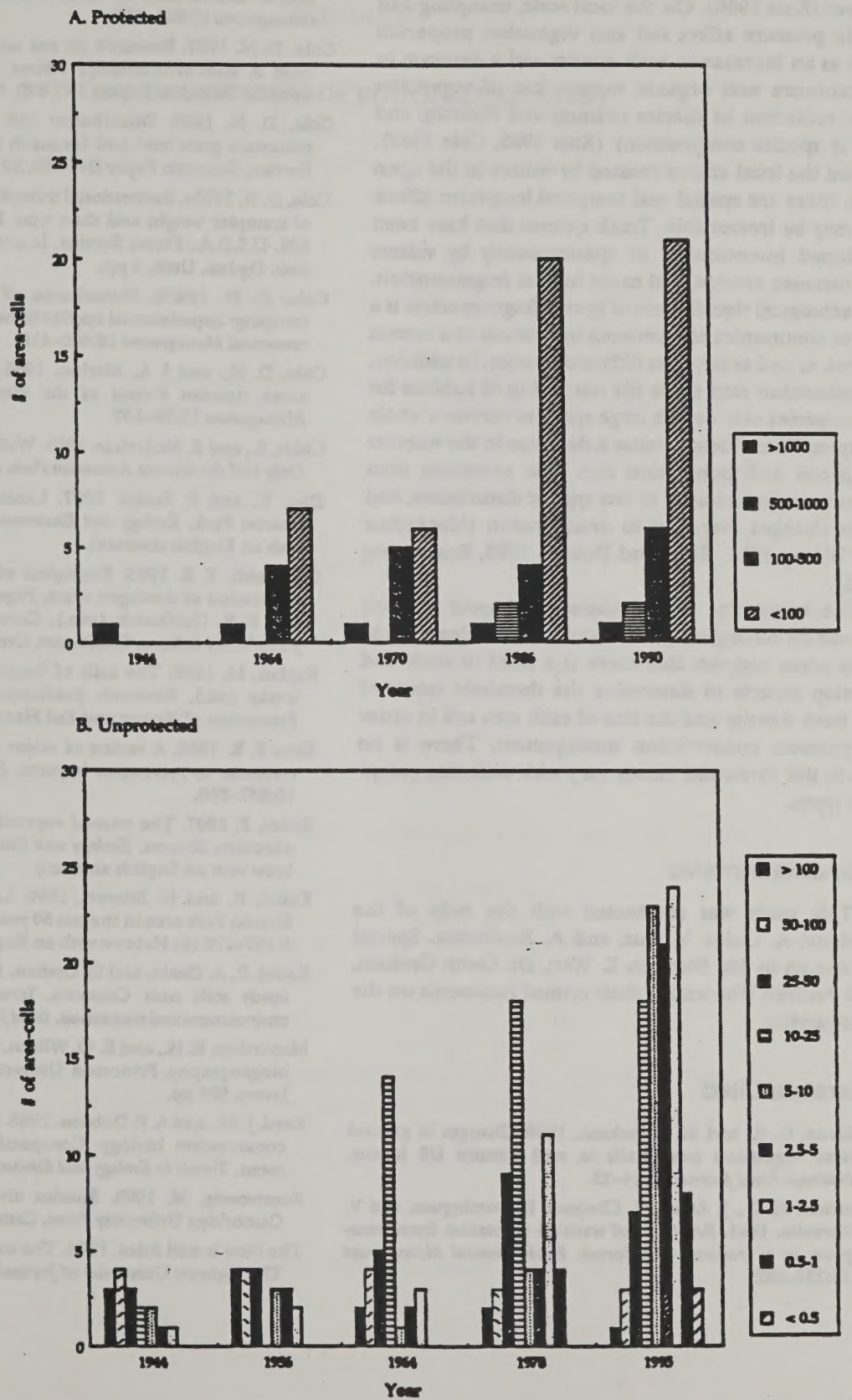

Figure 5. Changes in the size of area cells in the protected (A) and in the unprotected (B) sites in the past 50 years.

length of time use has occurred, and the ecosystem features (Kuss 1986). On the local scale, trampling and vehicle pressure affect soil and vegetation properties (such as an increase in bulk density and a decrease in soil moisture and organic matter, loss of vegetation cover, reduction in species richness and diversity, and shift in species composition) (Kuss 1986, Cole 1987). Beyond the local effects created by visitors in the open areas, there are spatial and temporal long-term effects that may be irreversible. Track systems that have been developed intentionally or spontaneously by visitors may increase erosion and cause habitat fragmentation. The ecological significance of spatial fragmentation is a lack of communication between individuals of a certain species, as well as between different species. In addition, fragmentation may cause the narrowing of habitats for those species that need a large space to survive a whole life-span. These factors cause a decrease in the number of species and population size. The ecosystem then becomes more sensitive to any type of disturbance, and slight changes may lead to deterioration (MacArthur and Wilson 1967, Reed and Dobson 1993, Rosenzweig 1995).

The knowledge gained about the impact of track systems on ecological systems and their development in open areas suggests that there is a need to study and develop criteria to determine the threshold values of the track density and the size of each area cell in order to promote conservation management. There is no doubt the threshold values vary with different ecosystem types.

Acknowledgments

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APPENDIX V

IMPLEMENTATION OF ROUTE DESIGNATION

IMPLEMENTATION OF ROUTE DESIGNATION

Implementation of the proposed route designations will be phased in over four years. The schedule below identifies when implementation will first occur. Some tasks such as monitoring would continue beyond the two-year period. Maintenance, patrol, and research are other examples of on-going activities that will continue beyond the five-year time frame. Funding would come from BLM funds, grants, and partnerships. Contracting and the use of volunteers would be used where feasible.

The immediate actions (0-2 years) will be:

- To post maps of the vehicle route access network in kiosks within the Planning Area, as well as at the Barstow Field Office.
- To complete "vertical mulching" and other necessary rehabilitation measures, designed to obliterate the visual entrance of designated closed routes, particularly where they intersect designated open routes.
- To complete the signing of designated open and limited routes. Signing of designated closed routes would only occur in areas where human hazards are identified, or where non-compliance with the designation is encountered.
- To coordinate with other agencies regarding the vehicle route access network. Upon request by governmental agencies, BLM would provide GIS produced 72' maps of this network. Coordination would involve: the San Bernardino County Sheriffs Office, County Search & Rescue and California Department of Forestry (Lucerne Valley Fire Station). Off-highway tour promoters working with the Barstow Field Office would also be informed of this network.
- Set yearly rehabilitation priorities and implement.
- Set yearly maintenance priorities and implement.
- Identify all illegal routes through regular patrol efforts. Rehabilitate per above, in a timely manner.
- Monitor route violations and effectiveness of law enforcement techniques.
- Explore new outreach approaches to contact visitors with brochures, maps, and information. Emphasize the Leave No Trace and the Tread Lightly programs.

Midterm actions (3-4 years) may include, as needed:

- Construct additional kiosks with maps of the vehicle route access network at main access points of the Planning Area. Produce/revise local area brochures with a map of designated routes.
- Experiment in techniques to reduce route widths down to 20 feet (10 feet centerline width) on specific routes.
- Monitor the success of rehabilitation efforts.
- Monitor the success of route signing. Adjust implementation schedule where needed.

- Develop and apply techniques to reduce route widths down to 20 feet (10 feet centerline width).

Long-term actions (4+ years) may include, as needed:

- Improve and monitor data on routes of travel in the Planning Area.
- Include the vehicle route access network on all revised surface land status maps (1:100,000 scale). NOTE: The Desert Access Guides will be discontinued and much of the above information would be included in new surface land status maps.
- Explore technology for new methods to sell route network maps.
- Complete a random sample analysis of soil compaction in disturbed and undisturbed soil areas within the Ord Mountain Planning Area.
- Complete a random sample analysis of vegetation condition in disturbed and undisturbed soil areas within the Ord Mountain Planning Area.
- Complete a random sample analysis of the condition of general wildlife populations in disturbed and undisturbed soil areas within the Ord Mountain Planning Area.

Budgets/Funding

BLM anticipates funding levels will remain relatively constant for the next year. We do anticipate increased appropriated funds in Fiscal Year 2001, and in future years, to finalize all route designation efforts in the California Desert. Appropriated funding for recreation, recreation facilities, threatened and endangered species, and cultural resources programs would all be used for initial route signing and closed route rehabilitation work, as all of these programs benefit from an effective vehicle route network. Funding would also be sought from other sources such as California Off-Highway Vehicle and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grants. Updating surface land status maps (formerly Desert Access Guide Maps), developing brochures, maintenance of designated open routes, sign replacement and installing kiosks are tasks that would be funded through regular program appropriations. Whenever possible, volunteers, military training missions, donations of labor and equipment, and other sources of free labor will be utilized to stretch existing labor dollars. The use of map fees is also a possible funding source. The implementation period for the Proposed Action would be extended if funding shortfalls are encountered in the agency budgeting or grant awarding processes.

Patrolling

Patrolling by Law Enforcement, Recreation and Visitor Services personnel is a high priority task because such patrols help minimize damage to cultural and recreational resources, as well as sensitive plant and wildlife species. Patrols are critical to obtaining compliance with the vehicle access route network. Visitor Service and Recreation staff would patrol designated open routes to make outreach contacts with visitors, to install and repair signs, and to remedy any non-compliance with the designated route network (e.g. rake out or disguise OHV tracks on those designated closed routes that have been rehabilitated). They would also identify where maintenance is needed, where violations are occurring, and collect other information on specific routes.

Law Enforcement staff would enforce the network designations, identify potentially hazardous situations/areas and focus on life-threatening emergencies. Patrolling staff would also assist the Sheriff's Office in search and rescue operations and would continue to provide first aid assistance to visitors. Volunteers could be used for similar purposes, but the interests and long-term availability of volunteers is variable. Volunteer participation is restricted where potentially hazardous activities may be encountered (e.g., search and rescue operations).

The effectiveness of patrols is strongly related to visitation. If visitors are not present, patrols are limited to doing maintenance and recording damage. Their outreach functions are not applied in such situations. Visitation data and models may need to be generated for the Planning Area, in order to increase the efficiency and quality of contacts with visitors.

Route Maintenance

Normal route maintenance is limited to replacing signs and grading/smoothing out bumps in routes. Per the Proposed Action, maintenance of open route berms, or "burning in" the routes, would be applied as a grading maintenance action within the Planning Area. Occasionally, approach work is also needed where washes are crossed and/or for erosion control. Costs for such grading and smoothing work is currently $125.00/mile. At least 12-20 miles of grading per year are planned. Additional costs include that associated with transporting heavy equipment, currently averaging $65.00/hour. Planned work is likely to be completed by BLM employees and California Conservation Corps crews. However, contracting would be considered when determined cost effective or should staffing shortages occur. When available, volunteer labor and equipment would be used to stretch available agency funding and to increase the amount of route mileage maintained annually.

Sign maintenance would include:

1. Installing emergency safety and resource closure signs as needs occur.
2. Replacing faded and damaged signs with stick-on versions for both carsonite and metal signs.
3. Replacing damaged or faded metal signs.
4. Removing and replacing damaged sign posts and signs.
5. Installing new signs where violations occur and as safety needs are identified.

Infrequent major storms may require major open route repair work. At times such repair work may become a reconstruction project.

Sign Implementation

Signing is an important tool for managing vehicle routes. The BLM uses signs to provide various types of information to visitors. For example, even though the visitor is responsible for knowing and complying with existing rules and regulations, the BLM still uses signs and other methods to provide regulatory information. A common problem encountered on public lands is ineffective spacing of signs. An attempt would be made in this designation and implementation effort to install route signs on a line-of-sight basis. Such spacing would facilitate compliance with the vehicle access route network and allow visitors to know more precisely where they are in the Planning Area. Other uses of signs for managing vehicle use in the Planning Area would entail:

1. Providing interpretive information about the area;
2. Describing regulations for the area;
3. Informing visitors of changes in route designations (e.g., emergency safety closures); and
4. Advising visitors of where and how to obtain help in an emergency.

Only area designation signs and route number signs relate directly to implementing the vehicle access route network proposed herein. The presence or absence of signs does not change the designation of the route with one primary exception: all routes not signed, as open would be considered closed. The following suggestions have been formulated to assist on-the-ground signing within the Planning Area:

1. Whenever routes of travel cross, they will be treated as two intersections. One sign for each route;

2. Two signs would be needed at each intersection of open routes;

3. Junctions of closed routes would not need signs, except in unusual circumstances. Vertical mulching and other forms of "putting routes to bed" would be used to obliterate the visual entrance of such closed routes;

4. Most of the existing route signs would need to be replaced;

5. Carsonite posts with decal text and logo messages would be used in most cases. Metal signs could be used in specific circumstances;

6. Most route signs would be route numbers with logo decals showing a route as open; and

7. A work month is often used to estimate the labor cost of installing 200 signs.

APPENDIX VI

REHABILITATION OF DESIGNATED CLOSED ROUTES

REHABILITATION OF DESIGNATED CLOSED ROUTES

The primary goal of closed route rehabilitation prescribed herein is to eliminate signs of previous vehicle use on designated closed routes, to the visual horizon where feasible. This rehabilitation, or reclamation, also needs to promote soil/vegetative parameters conducive to desert tortoise use, as well as other identified sensitive species use in specific areas, within this planning unit. Only route reclamation efforts not potentially resulting in adverse impacts to threatened or endangered species, or impacts to cultural resources, are addressed in this appendix.

> Note: Should proposed route reclamation of a particular designated closed route segment be determined to potentially result in adverse modification of suitable desert tortoise habitat, require tortoise handling or other form of tortoise "take", all required Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation would be completed prior to active implementation. Similarly, should proposed route reclamation of a particular designated closed route segment be determined to potentially result in any impacts to cultural resources; a separate EA and all required State Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultation, would be completed prior to active implementation.

One or more of the following road rehabilitation techniques would be used in the majority of anticipated route reclamation efforts:

> A. Placement of live or dead vegetation in a vertical fashion within the confines of an existing route or roadbed soil disturbance, in a manner designed to conform to adjacent terrain and vegetation. This technique is often referred to as "Vertical Mulching," and can also involve placement of boulders, as well as standing dead and/or down vegetation, upon the disturbed soil portion of designated closed routes. Only vegetation, rock and woody elements native to the immediate closed route vicinities are to be used in this effort.
>
> Collection and installation of such mulching material is to occur under the supervision of a qualified natural resource specialist, biologist or technician. Areas adjacent to where route closure/rehabilitation is planned to occur are occasionally capable of being used to gather dead vertical mulching material, in a manner designed not to create local dead and down habitat loss or visual impact. In no situation will shrubs that shade animal burrows of any kind be removed for mulching material. Dead & down native vegetation and live native vegetation from the immediate planning area region, i.e., such as that salvaged from nearby land clearing operations, can also occasionally be used as mulching material for a specific designated closed route.
>
> B. Use of pitting, ripping or other scarification techniques within the confines of route or roadbed soil disturbance, in specific instances where de-compaction of designated closed routes is thought absolutely necessary for quick site recovery. Such pitting, ripping or scarification could occur with hand-tool work or through the use of heavy machinery (toothed rake, pitter or similar device pulled by a tractor).
>
> The latter option usually requires either a qualified biological and/or cultural resource monitor overseeing such work, if the action is to occur during the active desert tortoise season (March 15 to November 15) or in areas of high tortoise burrow density or cultural sensitivity.
> All heavy equipment use is recommended to occur only following a site clearance by agency resource specialists and should be encouraged to occur in the primarily inactive desert tortoise season (November 16 to March 14).

Tortoise handling is not currently authorized for route reclamation efforts and should a tortoise wander into active reclamation areas, work is required to cease until such time as the animal leaves the site on its own accord. In operations where soil is excavated, either by hand or machine, for all aspects of route reclamation proposed herein, work would be required to cease if human bones or other cultural items are discovered. Work would not be allowed to proceed until such time as the Field Manager specifically authorized resumed operations.

C. Installation of small gates, fences and boulder barriers across the entrances to designated limited (gates and fences) and closed routes; and boulders or post and cable fencing along open routes located in specific reclamation areas; following site clearance by applicable agency resource specialists.

All rehabilitation personnel are required to participate in the resource education/training program provided by agency specialists. Some specific small gate, fence and/or boulder barrier installation actions will also employ applicable resource monitors, on occasion. All areas where boulders are be removed for use or placed, in specific barrier installation actions, require agency resource specialist clearance.

APPENDIX VII

PROPOSED ROUTE DESIGNATION SUMMARIES

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT
PROPOSED OPEN ROUTE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

OPEN ROUTE	BAT ROOST AREA	BIGHORN SHEEP USE AREA	BREEDING BIRD HIGH USE AREA	DT LOW EMPHASIS ZONE	DT MODERATE EMPHASIS ZONE	DT HIGH EMPHASIS ZONE	RAPTOR NESTING AREA	SENSITIVE PLANT AREA	SPRING OR WATER SEEP	UNUSUAL PLANT ASSEMBLAGE	WILDLIFE WATER GUZZLER		ACCESS TO PRIVATE PROPERTY	BACKCOUNTRY TOURING	DISPERSED CAMPING	HUNTING	MINING	NATURE APPRECIATION	RANGE MANAGEMENT	ROCK CLIMBING	TARGET PRACTICE	TECHNICAL DRIVING	THOROUGHFARE TRANSPORTATION	UTILITY MAINTENANCE
SJ1*		X		X		X		—		X			X	X		X			X	X		X	X	X
SJ2		X	X			X		X					X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	X
SJ3*			X			X		X					X	X			X	X	X				X	
SJ4						X							X	X									X	
SJ5*			X		X		X			X			X	X	X	X	X						X	
SJ6*			X		X		X			X			X	X	X	X		X					X	
SJ7*		X	X	X	X	X				X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
SJ8*	X	X	X			X				X			X	X						X			X	X
SJ9				X			X								X									
SJ10				X			X								X									
SJ12		X	X							X						X								
SJ13*				X						X			X	X	X	X	X							
SJ14		X								X									X					
SJ15		X		X		X				X				X					X				X	
SJ16*		X								X	X		X			X			X					
SJ17*			X			X				X			X	X	X								X	

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT
PROPOSED OPEN ROUTE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

OPEN ROUTE	BAT ROOST AREA	BIGHORN SHEEP USE AREA	BREEDING BIRD HIGH USE AREA	DT LOW EMPHASIS ZONE	DT MODERATE EMPHASIS ZONE	DT HIGH EMPHASIS ZONE	RAPTOR NESTING AREA	SENSITIVE PLANT AREA	SPRING OR WATER SEEP	UNUSUAL PLANT ASSEMBLAGE	WILDLIFE WATER GUZZLER		ACCESS TO PRIVATE PROPERTY	BACKCOUNTRY TOURING	DISPERSED CAMPING	HUNTING	MINING	NATURE APPRECIATION	RANGE MANAGEMENT	ROCK CLIMBING	TARGET PRACTICE	TECHNICAL DRIVING	THOROUGHFARE TRANSPORTATION	UTILITY MAINTENANCE
SJ18			X			X				X			X	X									X	
SJ19*						X				X			X	X	X								X	
SJ20		X		X						X				X	X	X	X					X		
SJ21*			X	X						X			X	X	X	X			X			X		
SJ22*		X	X			X				X			X		X	X		X	X					
SJ23*		X	X			X				X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X				X	
SJ24						X				X				X								X	X	X
SJ25*		X		X		X				X			X	X								X		X
SJ26		X		X	X		X			X	X			X	X	X	X					X		
SJ27*		X	X		X					X	X		X	X	X	X		X				X		
SJ28*		X	X		X					X			X	X	X							X		
SJ29		X	X							X					X	X								
SJ30		X		X	X					X					X									
SJ31		X		X						X			X	X	X								X	
SJ32		X		X						X				X	X								X	
SJ33	X	X		X						X							X	X			X			

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT
PROPOSED OPEN ROUTE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

OPEN ROUTE	BAT ROOST AREA	BIGHORN SHEEP USE AREA	BREEDING BIRD HIGH USE AREA	DT LOW EMPHASIS ZONE	DT MODERATE EMPHASIS ZONE	DT HIGH EMPHASIS ZONE	RAPTOR NESTING AREA	SENSITIVE PLANT AREA	SPRING OR WATER SEEP	UNUSUAL PLANT ASSEMBLAGE	WILDLIFE WATER GUZZLER		ACCESS TO PRIVATE PROPERTY	BACKCOUNTRY TOURING	DISPERSED CAMPING	HUNTING	MINING	NATURE APPRECIATION	RANGE MANAGEMENT	ROCK CLIMBING	TARGET PRACTICE	TECHNICAL DRIVING	THOROUGHFARE TRANSPORTATION	UTILITY MAINTENANCE
SJ34*	X	X	X						X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X						
SJ35*		X	X			X				X			X	X				X		X				
SJ36		X	X							X				X			X							
Total	3	23	18	14	7	15	5	2	1	30	4		22	26	21	16	9	10	10	3	1	10	16	6

*REQUIRES ACQUISITION OF EASEMENT FROM LANDOWNER TO FORMALLY RECOGNIZE PRIVATE LAND PORTIONS OF ROUTE AS OPEN.

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT
PROPOSED LIMITED ROUTE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

LIMITED ROUTE	BAT ROOST AREA	BIGHORN SHEEP USE AREA	BREEDING BIRD HIGH USE AREA	DT LOW EMPHASIS ZONE	DT MODERATE EMPHASIS ZONE	DT HIGH EMPHASIS ZONE	RAPTOR NESTING AREA	SENSITIVE PLANT AREA	SPRING OR WATER SEEP	UNUSUAL PLANT ASSEMBLAGE	WILDLIFE WATER GUZZLER		ACCESS TO PRIVATE PROPERTY	BACKCOUNTRY TOURING	DISPERSED CAMPING	HUNTING	MINING	NATURE APPRECIATION	RANGE MANAGEMENT	ROCK CLIMBING	TARGET PRACTICE	TECHNICAL DRIVING	THOROUGHFARE TRANSPORTATION	UTILITY MAINTENANCE
SJL1		X	X			X							X											
SJL2		X	X			X							X											
SJL3		X	X			X							X											
SJL4			X		X		X				X				X	X								
SJL5	X	X	X						X	X									X					
SJL6		X	X						X	X						X			X					
SJL7		X	X							X			X											
SJL8		X					X			X			X			X			X					X
SJL9*		X	X				X			X	X					X				X		X		
SJL10		X								X			X	X			X							
SJL11		X	X	X						X	X		X			X								
SJL12		X			X					X			X											
SJL13		X		X						X			X											
Total	1	12	9	2	2	3	3	0	2	9	3	-	9	1	1	5	1	0	3	1	0	1	0	1

*REQUIRES ACQUISITION OF EASEMENT FROM LANDOWNER TO FORMALLY RECOGNIZE PRIVATE LAND PORTIONS OF ROUTE AS LIMITED.

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT
PROPOSED CLOSED ROUTE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

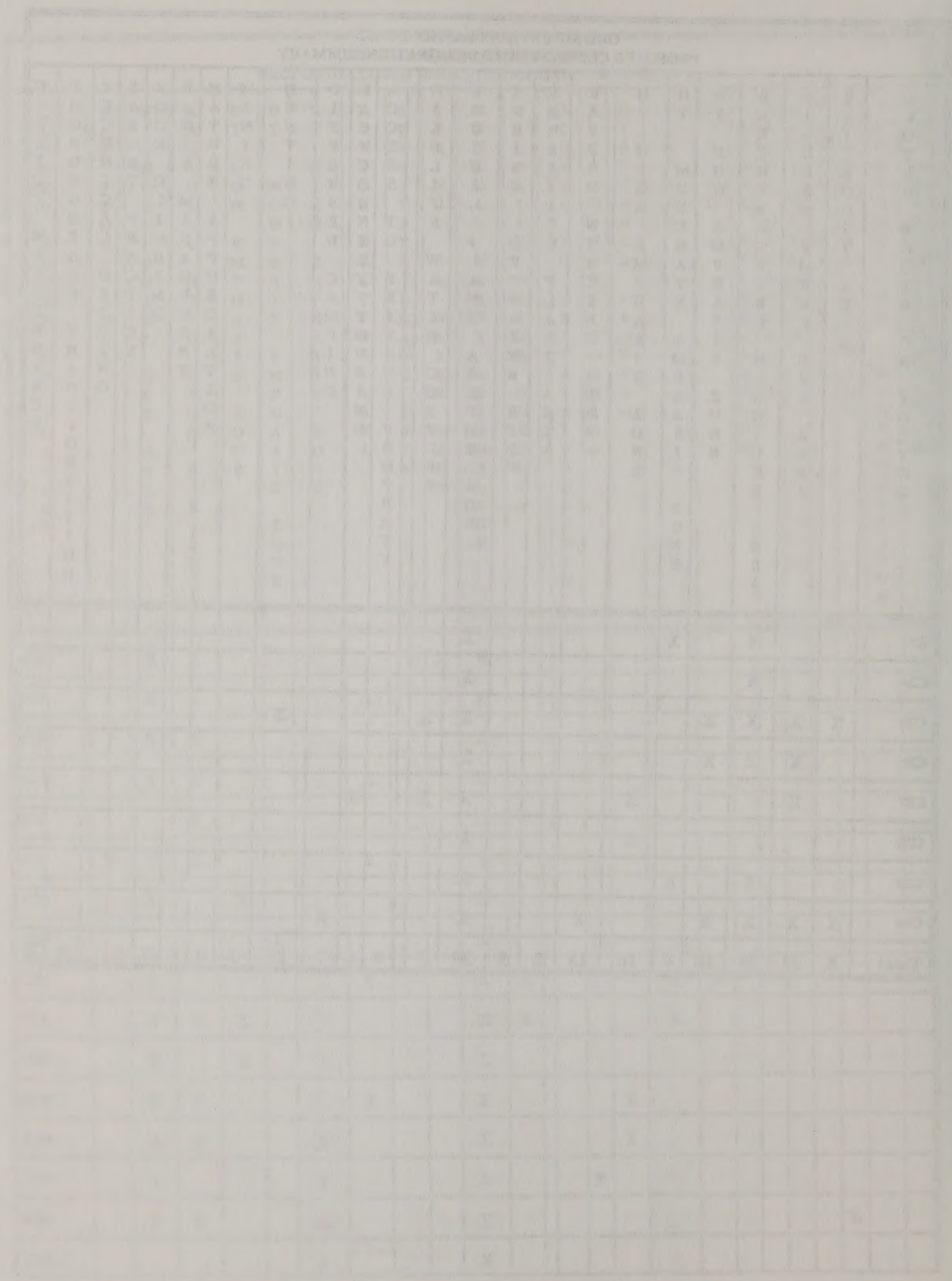
CLOSED ROUTE OR POLYGON	BAT ROOST AREA	BIGHORN SHEEP USE AREA	BREEDING BIRD HIGH USE AREA	DT LOW EMPHASIS ZONE	DT MODERATE EMPHASIS ZONE	DT HIGH EMPHASIS ZONE	RAPTOR NESTING AREA	SENSITIVE PLANT AREA	SPRING OR WATER SEEP	UNUSUAL PLANT ASSEMBLAGE	WILDLIFE WATER GUZZLER	ACCESS TO PRIVATE PROPERTY	BACKCOUNTRY TOURING	DISPERSED CAMPING	HUNTING	MINING	NATURE APPRECIATION	RANGE MANAGEMENT	ROCK CLIMBING	TARGET PRACTICE	TECHNICAL DRIVING	THOROUGHFARE TRANSPORTATION	UTILITY MAINTENANCE
C1		X	X			X		X					X									
C2		X	X			X		X														
C3		X				X	X			X						X						
C4			X		X		X				X			X	X					X		
C5			X				X							X	X							
C6	X			X			X			X			X	X								
C7			X	X			X															
C8		X	X				X		X	X					X							
C9		X	X						X	X					X							
C10	X	X					X			X			X		X							
C11		X	X			X				X												
C12		X	X							X					X							
C13	X	X	X						X	X				X	X							
C14	X	X	X							X					X							
C15			X	X						X												
C16			X	X						X												

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT
PROPOSED CLOSED ROUTE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

CLOSED ROUTE OR POLYGON	BAT ROOST AREA	BIGHORN SHEEP USE AREA	BREEDING BIRD HIGH USE AREA	DT LOW EMPHASIS ZONE	DT MODERATE EMPHASIS ZONE	DT HIGH EMPHASIS ZONE	RAPTOR NESTING AREA	SENSITIVE PLANT AREA	SPRING OR WATER SEEP	UNUSUAL PLANT ASSEMBLAGE	WILDLIFE WATER GUZZLER		ACCESS TO PRIVATE PROPERTY	BACKCOUNTRY TOURING	DISPERSED CAMPING	HUNTING	MINING	NATURE APPRECIATION	RANGE MANAGEMENT	ROCK CLIMBING	TARGET PRACTICE	TECHNICAL DRIVING	THOROUGHFARE TRANSPORTATION	UTILITY MAINTENANCE
C17		X	X						X	X														
C18	X	X	X				X		X	X				X										
C19		X	X							X														
C20		X	X				X			X														
C21			X							X														
C22	X	X	X				X			X														
C23		X		X						X														
C24					X					X														
C25		X					X			X	X					X	X							
C26		X	X	X						X	X					X								
C27		X		X						X														
C28		X	X				X			X					X									
C29		X	X			X				X					X									
C30		X				X				X				X										
C31		X	X			X				X												X		
C32						X				X														

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT
PROPOSED CLOSED ROUTE DESIGNATION SUMMARY

CLOSED ROUTE OR POLYGON	BAT ROOST AREA	BIGHORN SHEEP USE AREA	BREEDING BIRD HIGH USE AREA	DT LOW EMPHASIS ZONE	DT MODERATE EMPHASIS ZONE	DT HIGH EMPHASIS ZONE	RAPTOR NESTING AREA	SENSITIVE PLANT AREA	SPRING OR WATER SEEP	UNUSUAL PLANT ASSEMBLAGE	WILDLIFE WATER GUZZLER	ACCESS TO PRIVATE PROPERTY	BACKCOUNTRY TOURING	DISPERSED CAMPING	HUNTING	MINING	NATURE APPRECIATION	RANGE MANAGEMENT	ROCK CLIMBING	TARGET PRACTICE	TECHNICAL DRIVING	THOROUGHFARE TRANSPORTATION	UTILITY MAINTENANCE
C33			X		X					X													
C34			X							X													
C35	X	X	X	X						X	X				X								
C36		X	X	X						X													
C37		X				X				X	X		X										
C38						X				X													
C39			X		X					X													
C40	X	X	X	X			X			X				X									
Total	8	27	29	10	4	10	13	2	5	35	5	0	6	7	11	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0



APPENDIX VIII

INDIVIDUAL
ROUTE DESIGNATION
RECORDS OF DECISION

PROPOSED OPEN ROUTE

RECORDS OF DECISION

for the

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ1 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ1, previously referred to as OM7 or Tyler Valley Road, crosses high/low desert tortoise emphasis zones; a bighorn sheep travel corridor; a raptor foraging area within the BLM-designated Newberry-Granite Raptor Breeding Area; and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ1 is one of the primary north-south trending routes of transportation in the planning area that also provides for private property access, livestock management, pipeline maintenance, hunting, wildflower viewing, back-country touring and elementary-challenge technical vehicle use. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ1, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ1 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ1 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ2 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ2, previously referred as OM4 (Daggett Wash Road), is within a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; an area known to support the BLM designated sensitive plant Mojave Monkeyflower; a raptor foraging area within the BLM-designated Newberry-Granite Raptor Breeding Area; an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (desert willow woodland); and a bighorn sheep travel corridor. Route SJ2 is one of the primary north-south trending routes of transportation in the planning area that also provides for private property access, pipeline maintenance, dispersed camping, wildflower viewing, hunting and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ2, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ2 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ2 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ3 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ3, previously referred to as OM8, crosses a high desert tortoise emphasis zone, a raptor foraging area within the BLM-designated Newberry-Granite Raptor Breeding Area, an area used extensively by breeding birds (wash) and an area known to support the BLM designated sensitive plant, Mojave Monkeyflower. Route SJ3 provides for private property access, livestock management, mining, wildflower viewing and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ3, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ3 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ3 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ4 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ4 crosses a high desert tortoise emphasis zone. Route SJ4 provides for private property access and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ4, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ4 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ4 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ5 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ5, previously referred to as OM1, divides moderate and high desert tortoise emphasis zones; crosses through a raptor nesting and foraging area within the BLM-designated Newberry-Granite Raptor Breeding Area; crosses through an area used extensively by breeding birds (northern segment sand as well as Mixed Mojave Wash Scrub and southern segment Catclaw Woodland Wash); and is located on the northern periphery of the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ5 provides for private property access, exploratory and recreational mining in a historic prospecting area and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ5, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ5 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ5 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ6 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ6, including that portion previously referred to as OM2, crosses a moderate desert tortoise emphasis zone; on the periphery of one raptor nesting area and through the core of a second raptor nesting area; and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ6 provides for private property access, dispersed camping and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ6, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ6 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ6 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ7 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ7, also known as SV183 (Pipeline Road), crosses low, moderate and high desert tortoise emphasis zones; crosses a raptor foraging area within the BLM-designated Newberry-Granite Raptor Breeding Area; bisects areas used extensively by breeding birds (Mixed Mojave Wash Scrub/Catclaw Woodland); and is located on the northern periphery of the Fry Mtn. Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ7 provides for direct east-west transportation through the planning area, private property access, pipeline maintenance, livestock management and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ7, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ7 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ7 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ8 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ8, also known as OM10 or the Power-line Road, is located primarily in a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; crosses a raptor foraging area within the BLM-designated Newberry-Granite Raptor Breeding Area; bisects areas used extensively by breeding birds (boulder-fields and Mixed Mojave Wash Scrub); is located on the periphery of a bighorn sheep travel corridor; and is within the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ8 provides for direct east-west transportation through the southeast portion of the planning area, private property access, power-line maintenance and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ8, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ8 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ8 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ9 and SJ10 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route locations).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ9 and SJ10 are located in a low desert tortoise emphasis zone and along the periphery of a raptor nesting area. Both provide easily accessible dispersed camping opportunities close to the primary access road for the planning area. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ9 and SJ10, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to, or degradation of, known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ9 and SJ10 cross areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, routes SJ9 and SJ10 are recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ12 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ12 crosses a bighorn sheep use area; bisects areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes, yucca stands); and is in the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ12 provides for hunting access seasonally. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ12, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ12 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and seasonal vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ12 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ13 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ13, the Anita Mine Loop Route previously signed as OM3, crosses a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; bisects areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes, yucca stands); and is in the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ13 provides for private property, backcountry touring, camping, mining and hunting access. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ13, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ13 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ13 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ14 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ14, previously known as the easternmost portion of SV183 (Pipeline Road), crosses areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (yucca stands/washes) and is located on the northern edge of the Fry Mountain Ancient Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Previously regarded as the eastern portion of SV183, this route is being designated open to provide hunting access, while also being situated in a manner designed to avoid sensitive cultural/wildlife sites, as well as private land conflict. Alternate east-west travel is provided by SJ7. Route SJ14 provides for private property access, pipeline maintenance, hunting and livestock management. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ14, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ14 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ14 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ15 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ15 (Ord Mountain Wash Road), crosses low and high desert tortoise emphasis zones; crosses a bighorn sheep use area; traverses through areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes); and is located on the northern periphery of the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ15 provides an alternative to SJ1 for north-south transportation through the planning area, private property access, pipeline maintenance, livestock management and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ15, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ15 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ15 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ16 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ16 crosses a bighorn sheep use area; bisects areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes, yucca stands); and is in the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ16 provides for private property, range management and hunting access. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ16, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ16 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ16 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ17 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ17 is within a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/yucca stands); and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ17 provides for north-south thoroughfare transportation, private property access, dispersed camping, and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ17, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ17 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ17 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ18 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ18 is within a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes); and the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ18 provides for north-south thoroughfare transportation, private property access and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ18, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ18 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ18 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ19 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ19 is located primarily in a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; crosses a bighorn sheep travel corridor; bisects areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes); and is within the Lucerne Valley Crosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Route SJ19 provides for direct east-west transportation through the southeast portion of the planning area and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ19, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ19 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ19 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ20 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ20, previously referred to as OM16, crosses a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; along the periphery of a raptor nesting area; through a bighorn sheep use area; and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ20 provides for hunting, mining, dispersed camping and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ20, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ20 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ20 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ21 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ21, including that portion previously referred to as OM25, crosses a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; through an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes/yucca stands); and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ21 provides for private property access, hunting, dispersed camping and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ21, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ21 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ21 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ22 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ22, previously known as OM24 or Quill Spring Canyon Road, crosses a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; a bighorn sheep use area; bisects areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes, yucca and catclaw stands); and is in the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblages. Route SJ12 provides for general public pedestrian access to Quill Spring as well as controlled vehicle access (gate) to the site for range/wildlife management. SJ22 also provides for private property access, hunting and nature appreciation. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ22, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ22 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and seasonal vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ22 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ23 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ23, including that portion previously known as OM30, crosses a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; a bighorn sheep use area; bisects areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes, yucca stands); and is in the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblages. Route SJ23 provides for general public pedestrian access to a wildlife water guzzler, private property access, hunting, backcountry touring, dispersed camping and nature appreciation. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ23, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ23 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and seasonal vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ23 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ24 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ24, previously known as OM7 or the Pipeline Road, crosses a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; a bighorn sheep use area; and is in both the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblages. Route SJ24 provides for direct north-south thoroughfare transportation, utility maintenance, private property access and backcountry touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ24, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ24 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and seasonal vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ24 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ25 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ25, previously known as OM9, crosses low and high desert tortoise emphasis zones; a bighorn sheep use area; and is in both the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Route SJ25 provides for utility maintenance, private property access and backcountry touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ25, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ25 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ25 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ26 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ26 crosses low and moderate desert tortoise emphasis zones; along the periphery of a raptor nesting area; through a bighorn sheep use area; and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ26 provides access for maintenance of a wildlife "guzzler" water catchment, hunting, mining, dispersed camping and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ26, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ26 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ26 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ27 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ27 crosses a moderate desert tortoise emphasis zone; along the periphery of a bighorn sheep use area; and the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone, Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone, and Jojoba Unusual Plant Assemblages. Route SJ27 provides access for maintenance of a wildlife "guzzler" water catchment, hunting, dispersed camping, nature appreciation and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ27, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ27 crosses areas supporting high resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ27 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ28 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ28 crosses a moderate desert tortoise emphasis zone; through areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (wash/yucca stands); through a bighorn sheep use area; and both the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Route SJ28 provides for private property access, dispersed camping and back-country touring. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ28, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ28 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ28 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ29 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ29 traverses through a bighorn sheep use area; an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes/yucca stands); and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ29 provides for hunting access and dispersed camping. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ29, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ29 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ29 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ30 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ30 crosses low and moderate desert tortoise emphasis zones; a bighorn sheep use area; and both the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Route SJ30 provides for dispersed camping. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ30, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ30 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ30 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ31 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ31 crosses a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes); a bighorn sheep use area; and both the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Route SJ31 provides for private property access, thoroughfare transportation, backcountry travel and dispersed camping. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ31, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ31 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ31 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ32 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1:**

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ32 crosses a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; a bighorn sheep use area; and both the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Route SJ32 provides for thoroughfare transportation, backcountry travel and dispersed camping. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ32, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ32 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ32 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ33 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ33, previously referred to as OM26 or One Ton Mine Road, crosses a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; a bighorn sheep use area; a raptor nesting area; and both the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages before terminating in a bat roost/raptor nesting area. Route SJ33 provides for backcountry travel, target shooting and dispersed camping. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ33, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ33 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value and terminates in a high resource value area, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ33 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ34 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ34, otherwise known as Sweetwater Canyon Road, crosses a bighorn sheep use area; through areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (wash, boulder hillsides, mineshafts, catclaw and yucca stands); both the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages before terminating in a bat roost area. Route SJ34 provides for controlled (gated) wildlife improvement maintenance, private property and mining access, backcountry travel, hunting, nature appreciation and dispersed camping. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ34, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ34 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value and terminates in a high resource value area, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ34 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ35 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ35 is located within a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/yucca stands); a bighorn sheep use area and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ35 provides for private property access, backcountry touring, rock climbing and nature appreciation. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ35, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ35 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined high. Consequently, route SJ35 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJ36 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: ***OPEN*** CLOSED LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJ36 is located in a bighorn sheep use area; crosses areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes, yucca stands); and is in the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Route SJ36 provides for backcountry touring and mining access. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJ36, and this route in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJ36 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined moderate. Consequently, route SJ36 is recommended *OPEN*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

PROPOSED LIMITED ROUTE

RECORDS OF DECISION

for the

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJL1, SJL2 and SJL3 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN CLOSED ***LIMITED***

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes SJL1, SJL2 and SJL3 are short routes of travel on public lands that directly access private land blocks located in proximity to Daggett Wash. These routes cross a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; a bighorn sheep travel corridor; a raptor foraging area within the BLM-designated Newberry-Granite Raptor Breeding Area; and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJL1-3, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJL1-3 cross areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use per limited use guidelines is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined primarily related to private property access. Consequently, routes SJL1, SJL2 and SJL3 are recommended *LIMITED to private property access vehicle use*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJL4 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN CLOSED ***LIMITED***

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJL4 is a moderate length route of travel on public lands that accesses two wildlife water "guzzler" catchments on the west slope of New Deal Ridge. This route crosses a moderate desert tortoise emphasis zone; a raptor nesting area; and both the Lucerne Valley Creosote and Fry Mountain Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblages. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJL4, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on public lands; maintains direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJL4 crosses areas supporting high resource value, continued vehicle use per limited use guidelines is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined primarily related to "guzzler" maintenance. This designation would minimize resource degradation and allow for "guzzler" maintenance vehicle use. Reasonable pedestrian hunting access would continue to be provided by the SJ7 parking area, or by parking alongside SJ5. Consequently, route SJL4 is recommended *LIMITED to "guzzler" maintenance vehicle use*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJL5 and SJL6 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN CLOSED ***LIMITED***

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes SJL5 (Aztec Spring Road) and SJL6 (Goat Spring Road) are short routes of travel on public lands that directly access desert springs currently used in livestock management operations. These routes cross a non-desert tortoise emphasis zone; a bighorn sheep use area and travel corridor; a raptor foraging and nesting area within the BLM-designated Newberry-Granite Raptor Breeding Area at SJL6; and the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJL5-6, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJL5-6 cross areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use per limited use guidelines is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined primarily related to livestock management operations. Consequently, routes SJL5 and SJL6 are recommended *LIMITED to livestock operation vehicle use*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJL7 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN CLOSED ***LIMITED***

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJL7 is a short route of travel on public lands that directly accesses a private land block located on the north slope of West Ord Mountain. This route crosses a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; through an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (wash/boulder hillsides/yucca stands); through a bighorn sheep use area; across a raptor foraging area; and through a portion of the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJL7, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJL7 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use per limited use guidelines is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined primarily related to private property access. Consequently, route SJL7 is recommended *LIMITED to private property access vehicle use*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJL8 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN CLOSED ***LIMITED***

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJL8 is a moderate length, gated route of travel on public lands associated with a communications site right-of-way grant, where vehicle travel is limited to right-of-way and range management purposes. This route crosses through an area used extensively by breeding and migrating birds (washes/yucca stands); through a bighorn sheep use and raptor nesting area; and through a portion of the Fry Mtn. Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJL8, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJL8 crosses areas supporting high resource value, continued vehicle use per limited use guidelines is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined primarily related to private property/right-of-way maintenance access and range management purposes. Consequently, route SJL8 vehicle use is recommended *LIMITED to right-of-way/private property access and range management purposes.*

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJL9 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN CLOSED ***LIMITED***

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJL9 is a moderate length route of travel on public lands associated with an un-reclaimed mining area. This route crosses an area used extensively by breeding and migrating birds (wash/yucca stands); through a bighorn sheep use and raptor nesting area; and through a portion of the Fry Mountain Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJL9, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJL9 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use per limited use guidelines is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined primarily related to private property access, wildlife "guzzler" maintenance and technical driving recreation. Consequently, vehicle access on route SJL9 is recommended *LIMITED to private property landowner access, guzzler maintenance and seasonal technical driving pursuits (limited to the July through January time period).*

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJL10 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN CLOSED ***LIMITED***

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJL10 is a short length, route of travel on public lands associated with an un-reclaimed mining area. This route crosses through an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (wash/yucca stands); through a bighorn sheep use area; across a raptor nesting/foraging area; and through a portion of the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJL10, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJL10 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use per limited use guidelines is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined primarily related to private property access. Consequently, route SJL10 is recommended *LIMITED to private property access.*

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJL11 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN CLOSED ***LIMITED***

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJL11 is a short length route of travel on public lands associated with an un-reclaimed mining area. This route crosses through an area used extensively by breeding and migrating birds (wash/boulder hillsides/yucca stands); through a bighorn sheep use area; and through a portion of the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJL11, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJL11 crosses areas supporting high biotic resource value, continued vehicle use per limited use guidelines is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined primarily related to private property access and wildlife "guzzler" water catchment maintenance. Consequently, route SJL11 is recommended *LIMITED to private property and wildlife water improvement maintenance vehicle access*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJL12 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN CLOSED ***LIMITED***

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJL12 is a short length route of travel on public lands associated with a private land parcel. This route crosses through a moderate desert tortoise emphasis zone; an area used extensively by breeding and migrating birds (wash); through a bighorn sheep use area; and through the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJL12, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJL12 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use per limited use guidelines is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined primarily related to private property access. Consequently, route SJL12 is recommended *LIMITED to private property landowner vehicle access*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **SJL13 (Refer to Map E, Proposed Ord Mountain Vehicle Route Network Map Attachment, for route location).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN CLOSED ***LIMITED***

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of he public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a; 4b; and 4c.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Route SJL13 is a short length route of travel on public lands associated with a private land parcel. This route crosses through a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; a bighorn sheep use area; and through the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone and Lucerne Valley Creosote Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing SJL13, and these routes in conjunction with other identified open and limited routes in the planning area, collectively form a vehicle access network that minimizes damage to known natural resources on affected public lands; maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes; and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Although SJL13 crosses areas supporting moderate biotic resource value, continued vehicle use per limited use guidelines is not anticipated to reduce these values at this time and vehicle access needs have been determined primarily related to private property access. Consequently, route SJL13 is recommended *LIMITED to private property landowner vehicle access*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental document. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

PROPOSED CLOSED ROUTE

RECORDS OF DECISION

for the

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING UNIT

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON: C1 **(Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for three Polygon Locations encompassing ten routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C1 Polygons are located in: a) a high desert tortoise emphasis zone with extremely high tortoise density; b) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; and c) an area known to support the BLM designated sensitive plant, Mojave Monkeyflower (*Mimulus mohavensis*). Transportation and recreation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been designated for the vicinity. This latter network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources, and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within C1 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C2 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 2 Polygon Locations encompassing 26 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C2 Polygons are located in: a) a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (shrub washes); c) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; and d) an area known to support the BLM designated sensitive plant, Mojave Monkeyflower (*Mimulus mohavensis*). Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high resource values listed above, potential impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within C2 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C3 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 2 Polygon Locations encompassing 18 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C3 Polygons are located in: a) a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (shrub washes); c) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; and d) a raptor foraging/nesting area. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within C3 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C4 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 2 Polygon Locations encompassing 13 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C4 Polygons are located in: a) a moderate desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/shrub washes); c) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; d) a raptor foraging/nesting area; and one e) terminates at a wildlife water guzzler. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within C4 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C5 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 2 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C5 Polygon are located in: a) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides); and b) a raptor foraging/nesting area. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C5 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C6 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 3 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C6 Polygon are located in: a) a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; c) a raptor foraging/nesting area; d) a bat roost and foraging area; and e) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C6 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C7 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 3 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C7 Polygon are located in: a) a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/yucca stands); and c) a raptor foraging/nesting area in the BLM-designated Newberry-Granite Raptor Breeding Area. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C7 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C8 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 2 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C8 Polygon are located in: a) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/yucca stands); b) a bighorn sheep use and raptor nesting area; and c) the Fry Mtn. Ancient Yucca Clone and Desert Spring Riparian (Goat Spring) Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C8 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C9 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 5 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C9 Polygon are located in: a) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/yucca stands); b) a bighorn sheep use and raptor nesting area; and cross through c) the Fry Mtn. Mojave Yucca and Desert Spring Riparian (Goat Spring) Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential impacts to these resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C9 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C10 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 2 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C10 Polygon are located in: a) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/abandoned well); b) a bighorn sheep use and raptor nesting area; and cross c) the Fry Mtn. Yucca Clone/Desert Spring Riparian (Goat Spring) Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C10 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C11 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 12 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C11 Polygon are located in: a) a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/yucca stands); c) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; and d) the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C11 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C12 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 5 Polygon Locations encompassing 14 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C12 Polygons are located in: a) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes/boulder hillsides/yucca stands); b) a bighorn sheep use area; c) a raptor nesting area; and d) the Fry Mtn. Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within C12 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C13 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 2 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C13 Polygon are located in: a) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (wash/boulder hillsides); b) a bighorn sheep use and raptor nesting area; c) a bat roosting area; and cross through the d) Fry Mtn. Yucca Clone and Desert Spring Riparian (Quill Spring) Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high resource values listed above, potential impacts to these resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C13 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C14 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 2 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C14 Polygon are located in: a) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/yucca stands/mine-shafts); b) a bighorn sheep use area; c) a bat roost and foraging area; and cross through the d) Fry Mtn. Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C14 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C15 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 8 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C15 Polygon are located in: a) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes/boulder hillsides/yucca stands/mine-shafts); b) a bighorn sheep use area; and c) the Fry Mtn. Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C15 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C16 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 3 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C16 Polygon are located in: a) a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; c) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes and yucca stands); and d) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mtn. Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C16 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C17 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 5 Polygon Locations encompassing 7 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C17 Polygons are located in: a) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (springs); b) a bighorn sheep use/bat roost area; and terminate at c) the Fry Mtn. Yucca Clone and Desert Spring Riparian (Coyote Hole, Lower & Upper Sweetwater and Willow Springs) Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these resources and low specific vehicle access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C17 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C18 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 3 Polygon Locations encompassing 5 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C18 Polygons are located in: a) areas used extensively by breeding and migrating birds (mine-shafts/spring); b) a bighorn sheep use and bat roosting area; and cross through/terminate in the c) the Fry Mtn. Yucca Clone and Desert Spring Riparian (Coyote Hole Spring) Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high resource values listed above, potential impacts to these resources and low specific vehicle access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C18 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C19 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 11 Polygon Locations encompassing 29 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C19 Polygons are located in: a) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes/boulder hillsides/yucca stands); b) a bighorn sheep use area; c) the Fry Mtn. Ancient Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage and d) areas of un-reclaimed mineral prospecting. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within C19 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C20 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 1 route).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The route encompassed by the C20 Polygon is located in: a) a bighorn sheep use area; b) a raptor nesting and foraging area within the BLM designated Newberry-Granite Raptor Breeding Area; and crosses through the c) Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes the route in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these resources and low specific vehicle access needs; the route proposed for closure within the C20 Polygon is recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C21 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 2 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C21 Polygon are located in: a) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (yucca/catclaw stands/shrub washes); b) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; and c) the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C21 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C22 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 3 Polygon Locations encompassing 13 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C22 Polygons are located in: a) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes/yucca and catclaw stands/mine-shafts); b) a bighorn sheep use and bat roosting area; c) a raptor nesting and foraging area; and in d) the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these resources and low specific vehicle access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C22 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C23 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 3 Polygon Locations encompassing 7 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C23 Polygons are located in: a) a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) a bighorn sheep use area; and c) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within C23 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C24 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 4 Polygon Locations encompassing 6 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C24 Polygons are located in: a) a moderate desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) a bighorn sheep use area; and c) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within C24 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C25 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 1 route).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The route encompassed by the C25 Polygon is located in: a) a raptor nesting area; b) a bighorn sheep use area; c) the Fry Mountain Ancient Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage; and d) terminates in a wildlife water "guzzler" catchment. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate resource values listed above, potential impacts to these resources, low specific vehicular access needs and the capability of Route SJ26 in providing for guzzler maintenance access; the route proposed for closure within the C25 Polygon is recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C26 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 3 Polygon Locations encompassing 13 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C26 Polygons are located in: a) a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; c) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes and yucca stands); and d) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mtn. Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high resource values listed above, potential impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within C26 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C27 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Locations encompassing 9 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C27 Polygon are located in: a) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/yucca stands); b) a bighorn sheep use area; c) a raptor nesting/foraging area; d) the Fry Mtn. Ancient Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblage and d) areas of un-reclaimed mineral prospecting. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate resource values listed above, potential impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C27 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C28 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 1 route).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The route encompassed by the C28 Polygon is located in: a) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes and yucca stands); b) a bighorn sheep use area; c) a raptor nesting and foraging area; and d) the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Recreation and transportation attributes of this route have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing this route and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes the route in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these resources and low specific vehicle access needs; the route proposed for closure within the C28 Polygon is recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C29 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 2 Polygon Locations encompassing 9 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN *CLOSED* LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by C29 Polygons are located in: a) a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; c) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes and yucca stands); and d) the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within *C29 Polygons* are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C30 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 1 route).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The route encompassed by the C30 Polygon is located in: a) a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; c) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes); and d) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Recreation and transportation attributes of this route have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes the route in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; the route proposed for closure within the C30 Polygon is recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C31 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 17 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The routes encompassed by the C31 Polygon are located in: a) a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; c) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hill-slopes); and d) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone/Fry Mtn. Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C31 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C32 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 3 Polygon Locations encompassing 37 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The routes encompassed by C32 Polygons are located in: a) a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; and b) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone/Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within C32 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C33 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 2 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The routes encompassed by the C33 Polygon are located in: a) a moderate desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes); and c) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone/Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C33 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C34 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 2 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1:**

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

Routes encompassed by the C34 Polygon are located in: a) a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) a bighorn sheep travel corridor; c) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (boulder hillsides/yucca stands); and d) the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblage. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C34 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C35 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 1 route).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The route encompassed by the C35 Polygon is located in a low tortoise emphasis zone; a bat roosting area; a raptor nestingand bighorn sheep use area; an area used extensively by breeding birds (washes/mine-shafts); and e) terminates at a wildlife "guzzler" catchment. Recreation and transportation attributes of this route have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing this route and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes the route in this polygon identified for closure, recognizes the adjacent SJL11 as a guzzler maintenance access road, maintains a system of direct transportation/private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high resource values listed above, potential impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; the route proposed for closure within the C35 Polygon is recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C36 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 1 route).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1:**

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The route encompassed by the C36 Polygon is located in: a) a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) a bighorn sheep use area; c) an area used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes and yucca stands); and d) the Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of this route have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing this route and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes the route in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; the route proposed for closure within the C36 Polygon is recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C37 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 8 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The routes encompassed by the C37 Polygon are located in a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; a bighorn sheep use area; the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone/Fry Mtn. Ancient Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblages and are located in proximity to a wildlife "guzzler" water catchment. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle network excludes routes in this polygon identified for closure, recognizes SJ23 as a guzzler maintenance road, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high resource values listed above, potential impacts to these resources and low specific vehicular access needs; routes proposed for closure within the C37 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C38 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 9 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The routes encompassed by the C38 Polygon are located in: a) a high desert tortoise emphasis zone; and b) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes the routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the high biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; the routes proposed for closure within the C38 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C39 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 3 Polygon Locations encompassing 11 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The routes encompassed by C39 Polygons are located in: a) a moderate desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes); and c) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mountain Ancient Mojave Yucca Clone Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter vehicle access network excludes the routes in these polygons identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate biotic resource values listed above, potential vehicle use impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; the routes proposed for closure within C39 Polygons are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

ORD MOUNTAIN PLANNING AREA
PROPOSED VEHICLE ROUTE DESIGNATION DECISION RECORD

1. FIELD OFFICE: **BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE**

2. ROUTE NUMBER(S)/POLYGON(S): **C40 (Refer to Map D, Proposed Ord Mountain Rehabilitation Zones with Closed Routes Map Attachment, for 1 Polygon Location encompassing 3 routes).**

3. PROPOSED DESIGNATION: OPEN ***CLOSED*** LIMITED

4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA: **43 CFR 8342.1**:

a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;

b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;

c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to insure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors; and

d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

5. THE ABOVE 43 CFR 8342.1 DESIGNATION CRITERIA APPLY:

4a and 4b.

6. ROUTE/POLYGON SPECIFIC RATIONALE:

The routes encompassed by C40 Polygon are located in: a) a low desert tortoise emphasis zone; b) areas used extensively by breeding/migrating birds (washes/mine-shafts); c) a raptor nesting/foraging area and d) the Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clone and Fry Mtn. Ancient Yucca Unusual Plant Assemblages. Recreation and transportation attributes of these routes have been evaluated and were determined not to warrant specific vehicular access attention. Criteria specified in (5) above have been applied in analyzing these routes and a vehicle access network has been proposed for the vicinity. This latter network excludes the routes in this polygon identified for closure, maintains a system of direct transportation and private property access routes, and provides a full spectrum of recreational opportunity. Due to the moderate resource values listed above, potential impacts to these biotic resources and low specific vehicular access needs; the routes proposed for closure within the C40 Polygon are recommended *CLOSED*.

This decision is in conformance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan of 1980, as amended. A finding of no significant impact was supported by the attached environmental assessment. It is my decision to fully implement the proposed designation actions as described above.

7. DECISION APPROVED BY: _____ DATE:_____

APPENDIX IX

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT CORRESPONDENCE

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE
2601 BARSTOW ROAD
BARSTOW, CA 92311
(760) 252-6000
www.ca.blm.gov/barstow

IN REPLY REFER TO:
6500 (P)
CA-680.32

Memorandum

To: Office Supervisor
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Ventura Field Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura CA 93003

From: District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
California Desert District

Subject: Initiation of Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Consultation on Ord Mountain Route Designation

The Barstow Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has recently designated a proposed motorized vehicle route network for the Ord Mountain vicinity of the West Mojave Desert. This proposed project not only entails designation of open, limited use and closed routes of vehicle travel, it involves implementation of this route network upon the ground. Route signing, parking area and barrier installation, construction of a limited number of gates/fencing and rehabilitation of designated closed routes are all addressed in this proposed action. The BLM has determined that this action may affect the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), a species State and federally listed as threatened.

The proposed action would occur within a region that is currently classified as BLM Category II Desert Tortoise Habitat, as defined in "*Desert Tortoise Habitat Management on the Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan.*" The proposed project area is within the designated Ord-Rodman Critical Desert Tortoise Habitat Unit. Surveys conducted between 1978-95 have estimated desert tortoise densities in the affected area to be in the range of 0-250+ tortoises per square mile, with the higher population densities occurring patchily.

To minimize adverse impacts to the desert tortoise and other sensitive species, numerous mitigation measures have been incorporated into the proposed action as mandatory operating parameters. Some of these include direct agency biologist oversight, biological and cultural clearance of all work sites, desert tortoise and sensitive resource education for all personnel, and the incorporation of measures designed to reduce the proposed project site's attractiveness to common ravens (*Corvus corax*), a known desert tortoise predator. As a consequence of the proposed action, potential and actual vehicle use/access impacts to the desert tortoise and other sensitive plants and animals residing in this planning unit should be reduced considerably.

Although no incidental take of desert tortoises or their habitat is anticipated to occur as the result of the proposed action, or is requested, this action would implement a "*Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan*" recommendation and would positively affect conservation of this State and federally listed species. Should a situation of listed species "take" arise in the course of project implementation, a separate consultation with the Service would be requested, or the "*Programmatic Biological Opinion for Small Projects Affecting Desert Tortoise Habitat*" (1-8-97-F-17) would be applied. Staff from both the Service's Barstow Satellite Office as well as the Ventura Field Office, have been kept informed throughout the development of this designation effort, which could eventually serve as a pilot effort for route designation throughout the West Mojave Desert.

Per Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, we are requesting formal consultation with the Service on the positive effect of the proposed action upon the desert tortoise and the Ord-Rodman Critical Desert Tortoise Habitat Unit. The environmental impacts of the proposed action, applicable mitigation measures (incorporated as operating parameters for the project) and a lengthy description of the proposed action itself, are described in detail within the attached Ord Mountain Route Designation Environmental Assessment. Should you have site specific questions regarding this proposed action, please contact Lead Wildlife Biologist Tom Egan of my staff at (760) 252-6032.

Attachment: Ord Mountain Route Designation Environmental Assessment

cc: Field Manager, Barstow (CA-680) Field Office (w/o attachment)
Threatened & Endangered Species Coordinator (CA-630.50), CA Desert District, BLM
Threatened & Endangered Species Coordinator (CA-932.51), CA State Office, BLM

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE
2601 BARSTOW ROAD
BARSTOW, CA 92311
(760) 252-6000
www.ca.blm.gov/barstow

IN REPLY REFER TO:
6500 (P)
CA-680.32

Mr. Curt Taucher
Regional Manager, Region 6
California Department of Fish and Game
330 Golden Shore, Suite 50
Long Beach CA 90802

Dear Mr. Taucher,

The Barstow Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has recently designated a proposed motorized vehicle route network for the Ord Mountain vicinity of the West Mojave Desert. This proposed project not only entails designation of open, limited use and closed routes of vehicle travel, it involves implementation of this route network upon the ground. Route signing, parking area and barrier installation, as well as construction of a limited number of gates/fencing and rehabilitation of designated closed routes are all addressed in this proposed action. The BLM has determined that this action may affect the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), a species State and federally listed as threatened.

The proposed action would occur within a region that is currently classified as BLM Category II Desert Tortoise Habitat, as defined in "*Desert Tortoise Habitat Management on the Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan.*" The proposed project area is within the designated Ord-Rodman Critical Desert Tortoise Habitat Unit. Surveys conducted between 1978-95 have estimated desert tortoise densities in the affected area to be in the range of 0-250+ tortoises per square mile, with the higher population densities occurring patchily.

To minimize adverse impacts to the desert tortoise and other sensitive species, numerous mitigation measures have been incorporated into the proposed action as mandatory operating parameters. Some of these include direct agency biologist oversight, biological and cultural clearance of all work sites, desert tortoise and sensitive resource education for all personnel, and the incorporation of measures designed to reduce the proposed project site's attractiveness to common ravens (*Corvus corax*), a known desert tortoise predator. As a consequence of the proposed action, potential and actual vehicle use/access impacts to the desert tortoise and other sensitive plants and animals residing in this planning unit should be reduced considerably.

Although no incidental take of desert tortoises or their habitat is anticipated to occur as the result of the proposed action, this action would implement a "*Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan*" recommendation and would positively affect conservation of this State and federally listed species. Should a situation of listed species "take" arise in the course of project implementation, a separate conference with the Department would be requested. Alternatively, the "*Programmatic Biological Opinion for Small Projects Affecting Desert Tortoise Habitat*" (1-8-97-F-17) issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and concurred in by the Department, would be applied. The Department's Non-game Biologist for this portion of the Mojave Desert has been informed throughout the development of this designation effort, which could eventually serve as a pilot effort for route designation throughout the West Mojave Desert.

Per the Bureau/Department's cooperative agreement we are requesting formal conference with the Department on the positive effect of the proposed action upon the desert tortoise and the Ord-Rodman Critical Desert Tortoise Habitat Unit. The environmental impacts of the proposed action, applicable mitigation measures (incorporated as operating parameters for the project) and a lengthy description of the proposed action itself, are described in detail within the attached Ord Mountain Route Designation Environmental Assessment. Should you have site specific questions regarding this proposed action, please contact Lead Wildlife Biologist Tom Egan of my staff at (760) 252-6032.

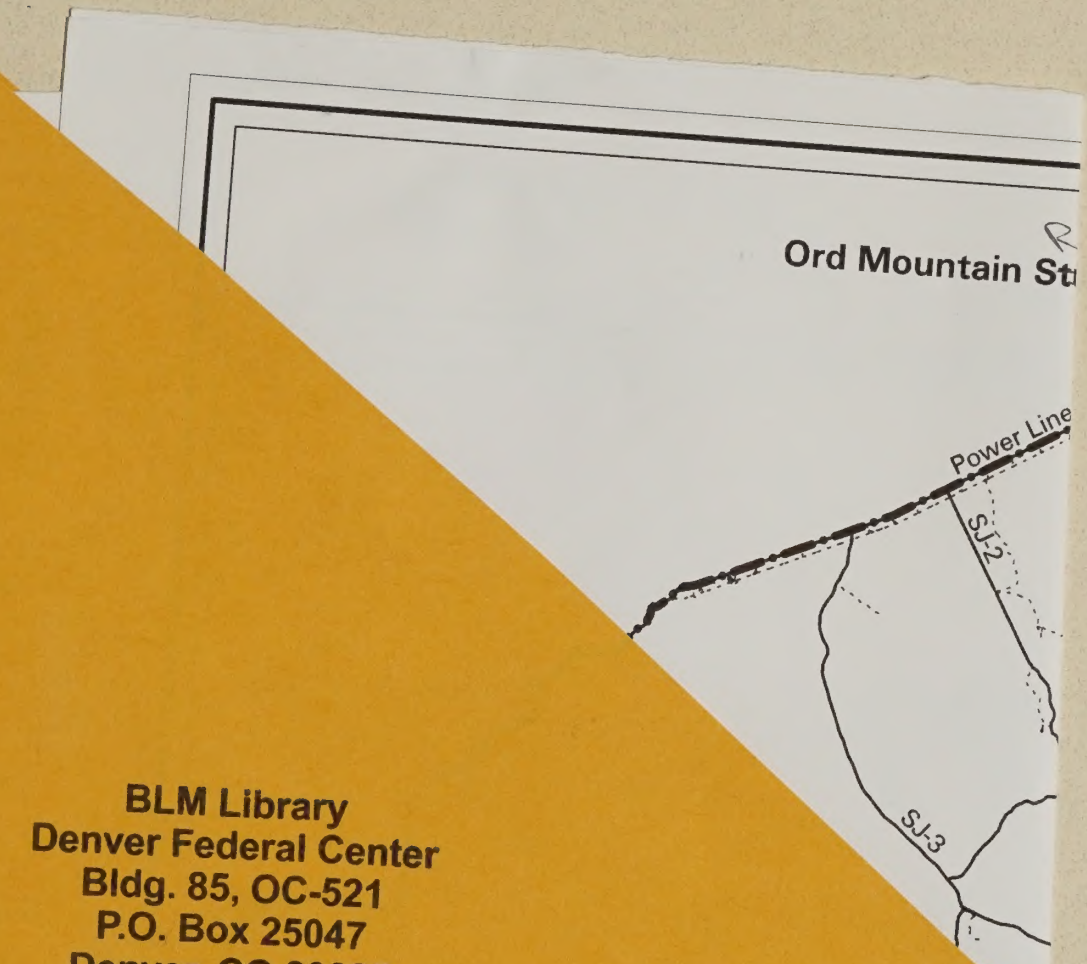
Sincerely,

Tim Read
Field Manager
Barstow Field Office
Bureau of Land Management

Attachment: Ord Mountain Route Designation Environmental Assessment

cc: **Threatened & Endangered Species Coordinator (CA-630.50), CA Desert District, BLM (w/o attachment);**
Threatened & Endangered Species Coordinator (CA-932.51), CA State Office, BLM (w/o attachment); and
California Department of Fish and Game's Palmdale Satellite Office, 36431 41st Street, Palmdale CA 93552.

BLM LIBRARY
BLDG 50, ST-150A
DENVER FEDERAL CENTER
P.O. BOX 25047
DENVER, COLORADO 80225



BLM Library
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 85, OC-521
P.O. Box 25047
Denver, CO 80225

1 folded map enclosed

Although no incidental take of desert tortoises or their habitat is anticipated to occur as the result of the proposed action, this action would implement a "*Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan*" recommendation and would positively affect conservation of this State and federally listed species. Should a situation of listed species "take" arise in the course of project implementation, a separate conference with the Department would be requested. Alternatively, the "*Programmatic Biological Opinion for Small Projects Affecting Desert Tortoise Habitat*" (1-8-97-F-17) issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and concurred in by the Department, would be applied. The Department's Non-game Biologist for this portion of the Mojave Desert has been informed throughout the development of this designation effort, which could eventually serve as a pilot effort for route designation throughout the West Mojave Desert.

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Sincerely,

Tim Read
Field Manager
Barstow Field Office
Bureau of Land Management

Attachment: Ord Mountain Route Designation Environmental Assessment

cc: Threatened & Endangered Species Coordinator (CA-630.50), CA Desert District, BLM (w/o attachment);
Threatened & Endangered Species Coordinator (CA-932.51), CA State Office, BLM (w/o attachment); and
California Department of Fish and Game's Palmdale Satellite Office, 36431 41st Street, Palmdale CA 93552.

Route Designation

Ord Mountain ~~Study Area Transportation Routes~~

Power Line Road
SJ-1
SJ-2
SJ-3
SJ-4
SJ-5
SJ-6
SJ-7
SJ-8
SJ-9
SJ-10
SJ-11
SJ-12
SJ-13
SJ-14
SJ-15
SJ-16
SJ-17
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SJ-32
SJ-33
SJ-34
SJ-35
SJ-36
SJ-37
SJ-38
SJ-39
SJ-40
SJ-41
SJ-42

Legend

- Designated Routes with Route Numbers
- Route Inventory
- Ord Mountain Study Area Boundary

Scale = 1:110,000

2 0 2 Miles

10000 0 10000 Feet

N

- This Needs Land Status
- Township Range
- Sections 31, 36...

Barricade or Gate symbol at deadends.

West Mojave OHV Project Study Area

Date of

Printed 3-9-94 SAMPLE PRINT (original Data)?

~~OR~~

~~11 x 17 size MAP~~?

PRINT